

"'Tracked to Death' is one of the best stories I have ever written."--Mayne Reid.

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Tracked to Death; or, the Last Shot.

BY CAPTAIN MAYNE REID,

Author of the Helpless Hand, Lone Rancho, Scalp Hunters, White Chief, Rifle Rangers, etc., etc.

SWEETHEART OF MINE.

BY ARNOLD KILMER.

Lowliest and merriest
Girl in the west;
Thy lips the cherriest
Lips ever pressed.
Thy teeth the pearliest,
By nature well set;
Thy locks the curliest
Locks fingered yet.
Thy eyes the greenest
Beneath the skies;
Even the serenest
Are won by thine eyes.
Thy heart the cheeriest
Of hearts on earth;
With its sweet mirth
Winning the wearied.
Thy love the holiest,
Brought from above;
And I, the lowliest,
Have won that love.
Life, sweetest, coziest,
Blessings be thine;
Girl of girls, restest
Sweetheart of mine.

Tracked to Death; OR, THE LAST SHOT.

BY CAPT. MAYNE REID,
AUTHOR OF "HELPLESS HAND," "LONE
RANCHO," "SCALP HUNTERS,"
"WHITE CHIEF," ETC.

CHAPTER I.

A HEAD WITHOUT A BODY.

A PRAIRIE, treeless, shrubless,
almost as smooth as a sheet of
ice. Grass upon it, but so short,
that neither ground-squirrel nor
gopher could contrive to dig it
without being seen. Even a
crawling snake could scarce find
concealment among its tufts.
Objects are upon it, sufficiently
visible to be distinguished at
some distance. But these are
objects scarce deserving a glance
from the prairie-traveler. He
would hardly deem it worth
while to turn his eyes toward a
group of gnat-wolves, much
less so in pursuit of them.
With vultures soaring above
them, he might feel more dis-

posed to hesitate and reflect.
The foul birds and filthy beasts
seen together, would be proof of
prey; that some quarry had
fallen upon the plain. It might
be a stricken stag, a prong-horn
antelope, or a wild horse crippled
by some mischance due to his
headstrong nature.

Believing it any of these, the
traveler would give fresh spur to
his steed, and pass onward, leaving
beast and bird to their banquet.

There is no traveler passing
over the prairie in question; no
human being in sight. But there
are wolves grouped upon the
ground, and vultures hovering
in the air above them. The
eager, excited movements of
both show that they are prepar-

ing for a repast. At the same
time, their attitudes tell that they
have not yet commenced it.

Something appears in their
midst. At intervals they ap-
proach it; the birds swooping
from above, the beasts crouching
along the sward. They go
close, almost touching it; and
then suddenly recede, starting
back as if in affright!

After a time they return again,
but only to be frayed as before;
and so on, in a series of approaches
and retreats!

Langham Hotel, Langham Place
London, England. Nov 14/71

My dear Sir,
I have just received your letter of the 11th inst. and am
glad to hear that you are well. I am
very much interested in your work, and
am sure that it will be a great success.
I am, Sir, very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
Mayne Reid

As Captain Reid, by virtue of the Act of Congress, conferring citizen-
ship upon all foreigners who had served with honor in our Military ser-
vice, now enjoys the fullest rights of an American Citizen born, his works
are all so protected by Copyright, both in England and the United
States, as to render their reproduction, by any but authorized parties, im-
possible; hence, to the SATURDAY JOURNAL alone must his vast audi-
ence of admirers, old and young, look for this truly noble work, which
the author says will be one of the best of all his productions.

Of himself, and of this new story, the author further writes: "I return to my work with something of my old-time spirit and vigor. My long
illness, while it rendered me helpless as a child, has left me unscathed mentally;
and with my now rapidly-growing physical strength, I take up my pen with a zest
which I never expected again would control me. I write this new serial with sin-
gular interest in the subject; I feel once more the wild, free life of the plains and
prairies; and, if I have pleased my friends in my former works, in this I shall, I
think, answer all expectations which you may excite concerning it."

The story will be given in liberal installments, from the author's own
manuscript; will be beautifully illustrated; and, altogether, will be one
of the pleasantest literary features of the year.

trapper or hunter of wild-horses
—had been struck down by the
cruel savage, afterward scalped
and decapitated.

But this head, if head it be, is
not scalped. On the contrary, it
still carries its hair, a fine cheve-
ture, curled and profuse.
Nor is it lying along the
ground, as it naturally would,
when flung down after being cut
off. No! It stands or sits erect
upon the soil, its chin almost
touching the surface—square as
if still upon the shoulders from
which it must have been taken.
With cheeks pale or blood-be-
danted, and eyes closed or glassy,
this, the position, would not
surprise, much less astonish.
But there is neither pallor nor
blood-stain on the cheeks; and
the eyes are not closed, not
glassy. No, they are glancing,
they are glaring, they are rolling.
By heavens, the head is alive!

No wonder the wolves start
back in affright; no wonder the
vultures, after swooping close,
ply their wings in quick strokes,
and soar off again.

The strange thing puzzles
both, and baffles their conceps-
cence.

Still, know they, or seem to
think, 'tis flesh and blood. Eye
and instinct tell them this; they
can not be deceived by both.

And living flesh it must be.
A death's-head could not flash
its eyes, and cause them to turn
in their sockets.

But the predatory creatures
have other evidences of its being
alive. At intervals the head
opened its mouth, showing two
rows of white teeth, from be-
tween which comes a cry, sure
to drive off the plumed and
hairy assailants—sending them
afar.

This cry is only put forth
when they approach too threat-
eningly near.
For a time it keeps them at
bay. It has done so for a half-
score of hours, most part of a
Texan summer day.

Twilight comes on, spreading
its purple tints over the prairie.
Still there is no change in the
attitude of the assailed or assail-
ants.
There is yet light enough to
show the flash of those fiery
eyes, whose menacing expres-
sion, by some mysterious power,
perhaps electricity, keep both
beast and bird at bay. When it
seems in danger of failing, the
cry is again put forth, sending
the wolves far off over the
ground, and the vultures high up
toward heaven.

On a Texan prairie, twilight
is short. There are no moun-
tains or high hills intervening;
no obliquity in the sun's diurnal
course, to lengthen out the day.
When the golden orb sinks be-
hind the western horizon, a
short-lived light of purplish-gray
color succeeds; then night.
This last descended upon the
prairie we have spoken of, and
the scene we have described:
the head of a man set square
upon the surface of the earth,
with eyes in it that could scintil-
late and see; a mouth capable
of opening to show teeth; a
throat from which came cries
evidently of human intonation;
around this object of strange,
almost supernatural aspect, a
group of gaunt gray wolves,
and over it a flock of black vul-
tures.

The closing down of the night
caused a change in the tableau.
The birds, obedient to their cus-
tomary habit—not nocturnal—
took their departure from the
spot, winging their way to some
well-known roosting-place.
The wolves, on the contrary,
stayed. For these, night was
the time best suited to their
prowling, cowardly instincts.
Under its darkness they might
have more hopes of at length
devouring that spherical-shaped
thing—seemingly a man's head
—that, by shouts and scowling
glances, had so long kept them
at bay.

To their discomfiture, twilight was instantly succeeded by a magnificent moon, whose silvery effulgence shed a light over the prairie almost equaling that of day.

It showed the eyes still angrily glancing, while the deep, nocturnal stillness rendered the cry that came from the lips to the wolves more fear-inspiring than ever.

A human head, without body attached, standing upright on the plain, in the moonlight magnified to the dimensions of the Sphinx! Around it a group of gaunt wolves, from the same cause, so increased in size as to appear like Canadian stags!

In truth, a singular tableau, one full of weird and wonderful mystery. Who can explain it?

CHAPTER II.

TWO SORTS OF SLAVE-OWNERS.

In the old slave-owning times of the Southern States—happily now no more—there was much grievance to humanity; oppression upon the one side, and suffering upon the other. It is true that the majority of the slave-proprietors were humane men; some of them even philanthropic, in their way, and inclined toward giving to the unholy institution a color of patriotism.

The idea—delusive, as intended to delude—is old as slavery itself; at the same time, modern as Mormonism, where it has had its latest and correctest illustration.

Though it can not be denied that slavery in the Southern States was, in many instances, of a mild type, neither can it be questioned that there were cases of lamentable oppression. There were slave-owners who were kind, and slave-owners who were cruel.

Not far from the town of Natchez, in the State of Mississippi, dwelt two planters whose lives illustrated the extremes of these two types. Though their estates lay adjacent, their characters were as opposite as could well be conceived, in the scale of manhood and morality. Colonel Archibald Armstrong, a true Southerner of the old Virginia aristocracy, who had entered Mississippi when the Choctaw Indians evacuated it, was a model of the kind slave-master; while Ephraim Darke, a New-Englandster, who had moved thither at a much later period, was an equally true example of the cruel class.

Coming from the New-England States, sprung from the Puritans, a people whose descendants have made both profession and sacrifice in the cause of negro-emanipation, this may seem strange. It is, however, a common tale, which no traveler through the Southern States could help hearing.

Every day he will be told that the hardest task-master of the slave was either one who had been a slave himself, or a descendant of the Pilgrim Fathers, who landed on Plymouth Rock.

Having a respect for many points in the character of these same Pilgrim Fathers, we would fain believe the accusation untrue, and that Ephraim Darke was an exception. In his case, there was no falsehood whatever. Throughout the Mississippi Valley, there was nothing more vile than his treatment of the black bondsmen, whose poor lot it was to have him for their master.

Around his courts, and in his cotton-fields, the crack of the whip was heard almost continually, its thong sharply felt by the sable-skinned victims of his caprice or malice.

The "cow-hide" was constantly carried by himself, his son, and overseer. None of the three ever went abroad without that pliant, painted switch—a very emblem of devilish cruelty—in their hands; nor came home without having used it in the chastigation of some unfortunate "darker," whose evil star had thrown him in their track, as they made the rounds of the plantation.

It was the very reverse with his neighbor, Archibald Armstrong, whose negroes never went to bed without a prayer upon their lips, that said "God bless de good massa," while the poor, whipped bondsmen of Ephraim Darke, their backs still smarting from the lash, nightly laid down, not always to sleep, but always with curses on their lips.

Alas! the old story of like cause, bringing about like result, is what we must chronicle in this case.

The man of the devil prospered, while he of God decayed. Colonel Armstrong, open-hearted, generous, indulging in a profuse hospitality, lived beyond the income accruing from the profit of his cotton-fields. In time he became the debtor of Ephraim Darke, who lived far within his.

There was no close intimacy, or even much friendship between the two men. The proud Southerner—come of an old Scotch Highland family—gentry in the colonial times—felt some contempt for his neighbor, a descendant of the Mayflower passengers. For all that, he had not been above accepting a loan from him, which Darke had been as eager to give. The latter had long coveted Armstrong's estate, and knew that a mortgage deed is the first entering of the wedge; in time pretty sure to bring about the possession of the *fee-simple*.

So stood things between Ephraim Darke and Colonel Archibald Armstrong. The former had determined on becoming the owner of both plantations; while the affairs of the latter, gradually growing desperate, had at length reached a point that promised Ephraim Darke an easy completion of his scheme. His debtor had fallen far behind in the payment of interest; the mortgage could at any moment be foreclosed; Colonel Armstrong was in danger of losing his plantation.

At this crisis arose a circumstance that might modify, if not altogether defeat, the design of Ephraim Darke. He had a son approaching manhood; by name, Richard, by nature resembling himself; only of a still inferior type of humanity. For the grasping selfishness of the extreme Puritan is not improved by contact with the opposite extreme of Southern licentiousness; and in the character of Richard Darke, the two were about equally commingled. Meanness itself, in the matter of personal expenditure, he was at the same time of dissipated and disorderly habits; the associate of the poker playing and cock-fighting fraternity of the neighborhood; one of its wildest youths, without any of those generous traits usually attached to such a reputation. He was Ephraim Darke's only son, and therefore heir-presumptive to all his property, slaves and plantations. Thoroughly in his father's confidence, he was aware of the likelihood of a proximate reversion to the slaves and plantation of his father's neighbor. But, much as the youth liked money, there was something he counted still more, and this was Colonel Armstrong's daughter.

There were two of them, Helen and May, both pretty girls. Helen, the elder, was more than pretty; she was beautiful—the acknowledged belle of the neighborhood.

Richard Darke was in love with her, as much as his little heart would allow; perhaps the only unselfish passion it had ever experienced. His father sanctioned, or at all events did not oppose it; for this wild, reckless youth had gained a wonderful ascendancy over a parent, who had trained him to trickery and heartlessness equaling his own.

With the power of creditor over debtor—a mortgage that could be foreclosed at any moment, a mortgage to the full amount—difficult indeed impossible of being transferred—Ephraim Darke and his son seemed to have the vantage ground, and might dictate their own terms.

What said Archibald Armstrong and his daughter?

Let us listen to their conversation, occurring about this time. It will furnish the answer.

CHAPTER III.

A BRACE OF BEAUTIFUL GIRLS.

"You do not love him, Helen?"

"Father, need you ask? Who could love that man?"

"He has made proposals to you, has he not?"

"He has."

"When?"

"This morning."

"I thought that was the purpose of his visit; though, at such an hour, I might have feared its being worse."

"Worse! feared! Papa, what could you have feared?"

"Never mind, my child; nothing that concerns you. Tell me, what answer did you give him?"

"Only one little word! I simply said *no*."

"That little word will be enough. My God! my God! what will become of us?"

"Father!" exclaimed the beautiful girl, placing her hand upon his shoulder, with a searching look into his eyes "why do you speak thus? Are you angry with me for refusing him? Surely, you would not wish me to be the wife of Richard Darke?"

"You have said that you do not love him, Helen. I know that you would not marry him."

"Would not! I could not. He has no heart, but the heart of a villain. I would prefer death to such a husband as him."

"Enough! I must submit to my ruin."

"Ruin! Oh! tell me what is the meaning of this. There is some danger. Trust me, dear father! Let me know what it is!"

"I may well do that, since it can not be much longer a secret. There is danger; the danger of debt. Know, child, that I am in debt to the father of Richard Darke; deeply so; completely in his power. Every thing I possess, land, house, stores, may become his at any hour—to-morrow if he will it. Nay, he is sure to will it, after hearing of that little word *no*. It will bring about the crisis I have been so long apprehending. Never mind! let it come. I must meet it like a man. It is for you, my dear girl, and your sister I grieve. Ah! poor things, what a change in your prospects! Poverty, coarse fare, coarse garments to wear, and a log-cabin to live in. Henceforth that must be your lot. I see no other."

"And, what of all that, dear father? What care we? I for one do not; and I am sure sister will say the same. But is there no way to—?"

"Release me from debt, you would say? You need not ask that, my child. I have spent many a sleepless night over it. No, there was only that one way. I never before spoke, or even thought of uttering it, for I knew it would not do. I knew, Helen, you did not love Richard Darke, and would not consent to marry him. You could not, my girl. Could you?"

Helen Armstrong did not make immediate answer. Not but that she had one in her heart ready to leap to her lips.

Marry Dick Darke! Wretch, worthless in soul, craven of spirit; coward as she deemed him; marry such a man, while another man that, to her, seemed possessed of every noble quality, beauty of person, boldness of spirit, purity of heart, in short every thing that makes heroism, while this other man, too, having told her that he loved her! To such a girl it made no difference, his being poor in purse, which he was; nor would it, had he been beneath her in social rank, which he was not. Her answer would have been all the same. She only hesitated giving it, from the thought that it might add to the anguish, at the moment, felt by her father.

Mistaking her silence, and, perhaps with the specter of poverty before his mind, urging him toward meanness, as it oft does the noblest natures, he said:

"Helen! could you marry him?"

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veteran of more than one campaign, in the center. On each side a lovely girl twining abaster arms around his neck; and, yet the two as different as if there had been no kinship between them. Helen, of gipsy darkness, May, fair as the Cyprian Venus.

It would have been a pleasing tableau to one who knew nothing of what had caused it, or, even knowing this, to him truly comprehending it.

For in the faces of all three there was affection that bespoke well for the future, and showed no distrustful fear, either of poverty or Texas.

CHAPTER IV.

JUPE AND JUPE.

EPHRAIM DARKE'S harsh treatment of his slaves had the usual effect. It caused them occasionally to "abscond." Then it became necessary to insert an advertisement in the county newspaper, offering reward for the runaways.

This cruelty proved expensive. In planter Darke's case, however, the cost was partially recouped by the activity of his son. Dick was a noted nigger-catcher, and kept dogs for the especial purpose.

He had a natural penchant for this kind of chase; and, having little else to do, passed a good deal of his time scouting the country in pursuit of his father's advertised runaways.

Having caught them, he claimed the reward, just the same as if they had belonged to a stranger. His father paid it without grudge or grumbling; perhaps the only disbursement he ever made in this wise. It was like taking out of one pocket to put into the other. Besides, he was rather proud of his son's acquiring himself so shrewdly.

Skirting the two plantations, with others in the same line of settlements, was a cypress. It extended along the edge of the great river, covering an area of many square miles. Besides being a swamp, it was a network of creeks, bayous, and lagoons; undulating, and only passable by means of a skiff or canoe; in other places, a slough of soft mud, where man might not tread, nor any kind of water-craft make way. Over it, at all times, hung the obscurity of twilight, in places more resembling night. The solar rays, however bright above, could not penetrate the thick canopy of cypress-tops, loaded with that strangest of parasitical plants, the *tillandsia usneoides*.

This track of forest offered cover for the concealment of runaway slaves; and as such, was it noted throughout the neighborhood. A darky absconding, from the remotest corner of the country, was as sure to seek it as a chased rabbit would run to its warren.

Somber and gloomy though it was, around its edges was the favorite roosting-ground of Richard Darke. To him the cypress swamp was a preserve, as a copse to the pheasant-shooter, or scrub-wood to the hunter of foxes; with the difference, that his game was human, and therefore the chase of it more exciting.

There were places in the swamp to which he had never penetrated; large tracts unexplored, and where explorations could not be made without much difficulty. This was not absolutely necessary. The slaves who sought asylum there could not always remain within its gloomy recesses.

Food must be obtained beyond its borders, or starvation would be their fate. For this reason, the refugee must needs have some mode of communicating with the outside world—usually, by means of a confederate—some old friend, or fellow-slave upon the adjacent plantations, privy to the secret of his hiding-place.

It was this necessity on which Dick Darke most depended—having often found the stalk—or "still-lane," in backward parlance—more successful than a pursuit with trained dogs.

About a month after his rejection by Helen Armstrong, he was out upon a chase along the edge of the cypress swamp. Rather should it be called a search; since he had found no trace of the game that had tempted him forth. As usual, this was human—a fugitive negro, one of the best field-hands belonging to his father's plantation, who had absconded and could not be found.

For several weeks, Jupiter—as the runaway was called—had been missing; and his description, with the reward attached, had appeared in the county newspapers. Richard Darke, being suspicious that he was still somewhere in the swamp, had made several excursions thither, in the hope of coming upon his tracks. But "Jupe" was an astute fellow, and had hitherto continued to leave no sign that would contribute either to his discovery or capture.

Darke was returning home after an unsuccessful stalk, in any thing but a pleasant mood. It was not so much from having failed in his hunt after the missing slave. That was but a matter of money, and as he had plenty, that disappointment could be borne. It was the thought of Helen Armstrong—his scorned suit, and blighted love-prospects—that gave the dark color to his reflections.

He had left the swamp far behind, and was wending his way through a track of woodland, which separated his father's plantation from that of Colonel Armstrong, when he saw something that promised relief to his perturbed spirit. It was a girl coming through the trees.

She was not Helen Armstrong. He did not for a moment suppose it was she. Not likely, in such a solitary place, so far from the plantation-house. But, if not the young lady herself, it was her waiting-maid—a mulatto wench named Julia.

Dick Darke knew the girl at a glance; even in the far distance, and under the dim shadow of the trees.

"Thank God for the devil's luck!" he muttered, as the mulatto came in sight. "She's Jupiter's sweetheart, his Juno, or Loda, or whatever he may call her. No doubt about her being on the way to keep an appointment with him. Good! If I mistake not, I shall be present at the interview. Two hundred dollars reward for old Jupe, and the fun of giving the d-d nigger a good hiding, once I get him home. Keep on, Julia, my girl; you'll track him up for me, better than all the blood-hounds in Mississippi."

While making this soliloquy, the negro-catcher withdrew himself behind a bush; and, concealed by the thick foliage, kept his eye upon the girl, still wending her way among the trees.

There was no path; and she was evidently proceeding by stealth—both giving color to her being on the errand he suspected, and indeed, he had no doubt of it. She was on the way to an interview with Jupe; and Darke felt certain of soon discovering, and, of course, securing the fugitive.

When the girl had passed the place of his concealment, which she soon after did, he slipped out from the trees, and followed with stealthy tread, taking care to keep sufficient cover between himself and her.

It was not long before she came to a stop—under a grand magnolia, whose spreading branches, with their large laurel-like leaves, shadowed a vast circumference of ground.

Darke, who had now taken stand behind a tree-trunk, had a full view of her movements, and watched them with eager eyes. Two hundred dollars at stake—two hundred for himself—fifteen hundred for his father, Jupe's market value—no wonder he was on the alert.

What was his astonishment, on seeing the girl take a letter from her pocket; and, standing on tip-toe, deposit it in a knot-hole of the magnolia!

This done, she turned her back upon the tree; and, without staying an instant longer under its shadow, started off toward Colonel Armstrong's house—evidently going home again.

The negro-catcher was not only surprised, but chagrined. A double disappointment. The anticipation of earning two hundred dollars, and giving Jupe the lash—both pleasant—both foiled!

Still remaining concealed, he permitted the girl to go, not moving till she was clear out of sight. There might be some secret in the letter that would console him? If so, it would soon be his. And it soon was his—though not to console him.

Whatever may have been the contents of that epistle, so cunningly deposited, they were of such character and meaning, that Dick Darke, after reading it, reeled like a drunken man; and, to save himself from falling, sought support against the tree.

After a time, recovering himself, he reread the letter, and gazed at a picture—a *carte-de-visite*—which the envelop also contained.

Then came speech, low-muttered, from his lips—words of dread import—of menace, made emphatic by a fearful oath.

The name of a man could be heard among his mutterings, and as he strode away from the spot, his firm-set lips, with the angry scintillation of his eyes, told that this man was in danger.

(To Be Continued.)

Border Reminiscences.

Adam Poe's Great Fight.

BY RALPH KINGWOOD.

THE celebrated fight between Adam Poe and the Shawnee chief, Black Feather, has been spoken of in the histories of early Kentucky, but I believe the particulars of that combat have never been given correctly to the public.

The fight was remarkable, not only on account of the well-known prowess of the parties engaged, but for the exceeding stubbornness with which it was conducted, and the many different phases it assumed before brought to an end.

They literally fought on the earth, in the air, and under the water.

Adam Poe, one of the first settlers of Kentucky, had often expressed a desire to meet the chief of the Shawnees in hand-to-hand combat, and these boastings having reached the ears of Black Feather, he declared his intention of seeking out the daring white man.

This, for two seasons, he actually did, but circumstances combined to keep them apart for that time. Finally, however, the opportunity came.

Adam Poe and his brother had been out hunting, and were returning, toward sundown, bearing a buck upon a pole between them.

When passing a small thicket, a shot was fired at them, the ball lodging in the head of the deer, which hung next to Adam Poe. To drop their burden, and rush for the thicket, was but the work of a second.

Adam taking the right, and his brother the left-hand side.

The thicket, proving much larger than either thought, they became more widely separated than was intended, and Adam was upon the point of returning to where the deer had been left, when, at a distance of a hundred yards or so, he discovered the gigantic form of the Shawnee chief, who was just in the act of firing upon him.

Adam had time to reach cover before the shot was made, and then began a series of tactics, such as were rarely witnessed in these wilds, for two of the most noted warriors of the day were each striving to gain an advantage over the other.

Foot by foot they drew nearer each other, leaping from tree to tree, from stump to stump, or rock to rock, as the case might be.

Impenetrable to each other, perhaps, they gradually "worked" round, until both stood upon the verge of a high bluff-bank, overlooking the river, facing each other, but some twenty paces apart.

Here, from behind separate trees, the wily foemen strove to obtain a shot; and, at last, Adam, thinking he saw his chance, fired at the exposed hip of the chief.

He missed his aim, and, like an uncaged lion, the gigantic Indian rushed from his cover, and bore down upon the in no wise daunted white man.

Half-way they met, the Indian wielding his tomahawk, having cast aside his rifle, while Adam laid his hopes and prospects upon the keen blade of his hunting-knife.

With a shock they met midway, and then began a struggle such as is rarely witnessed between two of the human kind.



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CAPTAIN MAYNE REID'S NEW SERIAL, TRACKED TO DEATH; OR, THE LAST SHOT. A ROMANCE OF THE CROSS TIMBERS.

commences in this issue of the SATURDAY JOURNAL, elegantly illustrated, with designs expressly prepared for this masterpiece of the Great Story Writer, whose "Scalp Hunters," etc., etc., are conceded to be the finest romances of Border Life in American Literature.

Our Arm-Chair.

Who Wrote "Beautiful Snow?"—Advertising to our recent reference to the much-disputed authorship of this much-overrated poem, we have the following letter from a well-known author and journalist, who knows of what he speaks:

"The poem, 'Beautiful Snow,' was written by Henry W. Faxon, when he was local editor of the Buffalo Republic. I knew him well, and saw the poem when it first appeared. It passed, with many other good poems, into the limbo of forgotten things, until it was revived and claimed by Signorine Watson, Doris Shaw and others. I am as certain of the authorship, at least, as I am that Bryant wrote 'Thanatopsis.' I could not be more certain of it, unless I had seen it written and put in type."

"Henry W. Faxon was a man of genius. Don't you remember his Silver Lake Serpent hoax, which created such an excitement in western New York? That was a stroke of genius. He was always throwing off something of the kind, and caring nothing for it when it was done."

"His 'Beautiful Snow' is nothing like as musical as his 'Pardner,' which is forgotten; nor is it near as good a poem as his 'Click, click, go the types in the stick,' which occasionally turns up in newspaper literature. Yours truly,

EDWARD WILLETT."

"We, ourselves, knew Mr. Faxon, in the days of the old Buffalo Republic, one of the most excellent dailies ever published in the interior, and believe, with our correspondent, Mr. Faxon is the real 'original Jacobs'—first in date and first in repute of all who have pretended to father the poem."

Who next?

Our New Heading.—We received from the artist, Chapman, a design for a new title-head to our paper, which so fully pleased us that we adopted it at once, and with this issue it is introduced to the SATURDAY JOURNAL's great audience. It is a change of great importance in design, and will doubtless be regarded with favor. We are never unwilling to adopt any change which adds to the beauty and interest of our paper.

Capt. Mayne Reid's Portrait.—A full-length portrait of this author, whose name is literally a household word, will grace our next issue. It is from a photograph sent us from London, by the Captain, taken by one of the most distinguished foreign photographers, and engraved in our best manner. Readers will thus see the great romance writer as he now is. It will be a portrait worthy of preservation.

To the Press.—To introduce the SATURDAY JOURNAL still more thoroughly into American homes, we open our list to our friends of the press, for clubbing with their own papers, and will be happy to have editors and publishers receive subscriptions for us in connection with their publications, viz.: we receive two dollars as our share of the combined subscription.

Announcing this clubbing arrangement will essentially add many papers to a good local circulation, in view of the recognized character and popularity of the SATURDAY JOURNAL; and we will be ready to respond promptly to all orders through our friends of the press on receipt of the sum named, for each subscription.

A Popular Paper.—The SATURDAY JOURNAL is our idea of what a popular paper should be. Pure in tone, varied in its literary features and excellent in quality, we have rendered the paper a favorite in homes and families to a degree which has surprised those who regard "sensationalism" and ephemeral fiction as requisites for a large circulation.

In fiction we have the best things attainable from the hands of such writers as Capt. Mayne Reid, Cousin May Caroline, Albert W. Allen, Mrs. Mary Reed Crowell, Bartley T. Caswell, Mrs. Elizabeth F. Elliott, Dr. Wm. Mason, Jr., Mrs. Jennie D. Burton, A. P. Morris, Jr., Capt. J. F. C. Adams, Capt. Chas. Howard, Roger Starbuck, Ralph Ringwood, etc., etc., almost all of whom write exclusively for us.

In humor we have the inimitable "Fat Contributor," Washington Whitehorn, Beat Time, Joe Jot, Jr., M. T. Head, Joe King, etc., etc., all very droll, amusing, and neither vulgar nor coarse, as too much of what is called humor is.

In essays and sketches our list is brilliant indeed, comprising some twelve or fifteen writers of whom American Journalism may well be proud.

In illustrations we employ only the very best artists, designers and engravers.

In printing-paper and general arrangement we aim at firmness, clearness and beauty.

"And can say, with great confidence, that no paper, in so brief a period, ever attained a finer reputation or a larger circulation."

A New "Star."—It has been our good-fortune to secure, as a contributor to our columns hereafter, the man of no little note in the North-west, Major Max Martine, whose adventurous life and peculiar personal characteristics have made him known from Hudson's Bay to the old Santa Fe trail. Major Martine, breaking away from the East, some years ago,

entered upon a reckless quest of excitement in the North-west Hunting and Trapping Grounds, and was, successively, Hudson's Bay Fur Company employee, Free Trapper, Indian-fighter, Captive and then a chief of the Teton-Sioux, with whom he remained three years. Finally abandoning his wild, adventurous career, he has returned to civilized life and habits, and with a rare fund of information, promises to become an entrancing story-teller.

We already have several things from his hands—among which are various sketches of Indians, Hunting and Trapping in the great North Wilderness and the Plains; but hope, ere long, to present a succinct and correct account of his own strange experiences. Readers will then see what a treat they have in store.

To Postmasters.—This issue is commended to the powerful and attractive patronage of the South-west, from the entrancing pen of the noted CAPTAIN MAYNE REID—beyond question unequalled by any living writer in the field of our Wild Western Life and Border Adventure. Writing exclusively, in this country, for the SATURDAY JOURNAL, the numerous admirers of the great romancer will find his productions only in our columns.

This fact makes it a comparatively easy matter for postmasters to secure a list of subscribers for the SATURDAY JOURNAL, at even the smallest offices; but, to render it still more easy, we will receive, from postmasters, two dollars as the year's subscription for any subscriber, thus giving them, as a commission, one dollar cash on each subscription of three dollars obtained by them. The subscriptions may be forwarded singly or in clubs, and the subscriber can choose any number of the paper to commence his subscription with.

A Timely Hint.—The prevalence of smallpox, in all parts of the country, is now a very disagreeable fact. In some of our large cities this loathsome disease is pronounced an epidemic, and the authorities are taking all possible precautions to arrest the spread of the pest.

If there is no cure for the disease, when it has once fastened upon the person, there is a preventive which gives a most assured protection against the contagion, and that is vaccination. This is so simple and so efficacious, that it is amazing that any person should omit to adopt it; but, since many do refuse or neglect to use this protective measure, it becomes those having the public health in view to enforce the order—be ye vaccinated!

Let none of our readers delay, for a day, this duty, if they have not already performed it; and let them see to it that others, who are indifferent about the matter, are compelled to protect themselves, for by this course alone can the dangerous and disgusting disease be abated and finally exterminated.

Ralph Ringwood.—We are pained to observe the recent decease of Capt. Alfred D. Hynes, the "Ralph Ringwood" who had become so dear to the readers of the SATURDAY JOURNAL. Capt. Hynes was a gentleman of wide experience in the peculiar field of our border life, and wrote with almost inimitable grace in the romance and fact of that field, as our columns will attest. Perceiving his merit, in that respect, we encouraged his work to an unlimited degree, and, as a consequence, we have on hand an amount of matter from his pen almost equal in quantity to what hitherto has been used, so that, though dead, our readers are not likely soon to lose his unique and most admirable stories of the West.

RECOLLECTIONS OF "ARTEMUS WARD," No. I.
BY THE "FAT CONTRIBUTOR."

To the multitude of reminiscences of the genial "showman" that have been printed, I am tempted to add a few of my own recollections.

I first met him in Cleveland, Ohio, in the spring of 1858. I was then connected with a Buffalo paper, and "Charley" Brown, as everybody called him, who knew him in those days, was "local" of the Cleveland *Plain Dealer*, a position which he had then held but a few months. He had written some sketches over the *nom de plume* of "Artemus Ward, the Showman," but up to that time nothing that had attracted much attention, though his witty local columns had been the delight of his Cleveland readers.

On my arrival in Cleveland I called at the *Plain Dealer* office and inquired for the editor, Mr. Grey, to whom I bore a letter of introduction. A tall, slender young man, of about twenty-four years, with a smooth, thin face, whose prominent feature was a high Roman nose; and very light hair that persisted in sticking straight out in all directions, stepped forward and received me with winning and unaffected cordiality, in the absence of Mr. Grey, introducing himself, as the associate editor, Mr. Brown. The gravity of his countenance, when speaking, was relieved by the twinkle of the merriest of blue eyes. He had a way of saying very funny things, as if they were solemn, if not melancholy, facts, which puzzled me much until I came to know him.

Walking along Superior street together, shortly after our introduction, we passed a dilapidated specimen of humanity, who had "ragabond" written all over him.

"Now, sir," said Artemus, with a look of mischievous merriment, as he pointed to the miserable fellow, "you wouldn't think that wretched being was, at this moment, the wealthiest man in Cleveland?"

"No," said I, looking at the man with some interest.

"Well, he isn't," returned Artemus, with a comical pucker of the mouth, while his eyes laughed comically.

It wasn't much of a joke, but it serves to illustrate one of his well-known peculiarities, a fondness for "guying" people, which grew upon him as his years advanced.

The first letter of Artemus Ward's that was generally copied, was his very laughable account of "Baldinsville" celebrating the laying of the Atlantic cable. This was printed in the *Plain Dealer*, in the fall of '58. His next successful effort, printed shortly after, was descriptive of his visit to the Free Lovers of Berlin Heights. In that letter he first embellished American literature with the significant word "gush."

"She is a sweet, gushin' child of natur'," said her mother.

"Let her gush!" I roared, loud as I could hollar.

In the spring of 1859 I accepted a proffered editorial position on the Cleveland *National Democrat*, and renewed my acquaintance with Artemus.

On the first evening of my arrival, he volunteered to show me around—make me

acquainted with the city—a very desirable achievement, as I was to fill the position of city editor. He "showed me around" so successfully that about two o'clock in the morning I began to feel almost as much at home in Cleveland as though I had lived there all my days, to say nothing of my nights. Artemus invited me to share his bed with him for the remainder of the night, and I accepted.

Adjoining his room lodged a young professor of elocution, who was endeavoring to establish a school in Cleveland. He was just starting out in the business, and was naturally anxious to propitiate the press.

"Let's get the professor up," said Artemus; "and have him recite for us."

I remonstrated with him, reminding him of the lateness of the hour, that I wasn't acquainted with the professor, and all that; but to no purpose.

"He's a public man," said Ward, "and public men are glad to meet members of the press, as restaurants are supposed to get up warm meals, at all hours."

He gave a thundering rap on the door, as he shouted:

"Professor-r-r-r!"

"Who's there? What yer want?" cried a muffled voice, evidently from beneath the bed-clothes, for it was a bitter cold night in February.

"I'm Brown, of the *Plain Dealer*," said Artemus, nudging me gently in the ribs, he whispered: "That'll fetch him. The power of the press is invincible. It is the Archimedean hour which—"

His remarks were interrupted by the opening of the door, and I could just discern the dim outline of a shirtd form shivering in the doorway.

"Excuse me for disturbing you, professor," said Artemus, in his blandest manner, but, I am anxious to introduce my friend here, the new local editor of the *National Democrat*. He has heard much of you, and declares positively he can't go to bed until he hears you elocute."

"Hears me what?" asked the professor, between his chattering teeth.

"Hears you elocute—recite—declaim—understand?—specimen of your elocution?"

In vain did the professor plead the lateness of the hour, and that his fire had gone out. Artemus would accept no excuse.

"Permit me, at least," urged the professor, "to put on some clothes and light the gas."

"Not at all necessary. Elocution, my dear boy, is not dependant on gas. Here," (straightening up a chair he had just stumbled over) "get right up in this chair and give us," (the boy stood on the burning deck), "adding an aside whisper in my ear, 'The burning deck will warm him up!'"

Gently yet firmly did Artemus boost the reluctant professor upon the chair, protesting that no apologies were necessary for his appearance, and assuring him that "clothes don't make the man," although the shivering disciple of Demosthenes and Cicero probably thought clothes would make a man more comfortable on such a night as that.

He gave us "Cassabianca" with a good many quavers of the voice, as he stood quaking in a single short white garment; and then followed: "On Linden, when the sun was low," "Sword of Bunker Hill," etc., "by particular request of our friend," as Artemus said, although I was too nearly suffocated with suppressed laughter to make even a last dying request had it been necessary. It was too ludicrous to depict—the professor, an indistinct white object, standing on the chair, "elocuting," as Ward had it, and we sitting on the floor, holding our sides, while A. W. would faintly whisper between his pangs of mirth, "Just hear him!"

It wasn't in Ward's heart to have his fun at the expense of another, without recompense, so next day, I remember, he published a lengthy and entirely serious account of our visit to the Professor's "rooms," spoke of his wonderful powers as an elocutist, and expressed the satisfaction and delight with which we listened to his "unequaled recitations!" The professor was overjoyed, and probably is ignorant to this day that Artemus was "playing it on him."

I never knew a man whose sense of the ludicrous was so keen as his, and he would go to any length to gratify it. I once came upon him at a little country inn near Cleveland, having a frolic with some old farmers whom he had fallen in with. Ward was mounted on the back of a white-haired old mare of seventy at least, and was riding a circus-act around the bar-room. The way he made that venerable mare walk, trot, run, go lame, waltz, and dance the polka, was too funny.

His jokes were not always well taken. We were coming into the city, one day, from a drive, and came upon some men engaged in tying up a raft on the Cuyahoga river. It was a hot day, and they were perspiring profusely. Artemus stopped his horse, and asked them, very gravely, why they didn't go and steal for a living, instead of toiling and sweating in that way. The result was, he had to lash his horse into a run, in order to get away from the shower of bowlders they hurled at us.

His Artemus Ward letters, which he wrote for the *Plain Dealer*, made his reputation, and were the best things he ever produced, for the reason that they were composed as the spirit moved him, and not written "to order." His column of "City Items" sparkled with witty paragraphs. It was difficult for him to write up the most commonplace item of news without some funny conceit creeping in. I remember his paragraphing an accident to a Cleveland lawyer, as follows: "Our old friend Bruce met with an accident this morning. His horse took fright and ran away, and in jumping from the buggy Mr. B. suffered a sprained ankle. Bruce little thought, when he defended Cole, the Ashabula wife-poisoner, that, in less than four years from that time, he would jump out of his buggy and sprain his ankle. Such is life."

I once asked Brown, (he didn't spell his name with an *e* in those days) what suggested his *nom de plume*, Artemus Ward. He said, when he was reporter on the Toledo *Commercial*, he reported the trial of one Ward, in that city, for murder. The parties to the trial were all a queer, ignorant set, and he said there were some ludicrous and grotesque features to the trial, that the name of Ward became indissolubly associated in his mind with the outlandish and comical. He always considered Artemus a funny name, so he united the two, and thus adopted Artemus Ward for a *nom de plume*.

I think Artemus left few enemies behind, when, in the fall of '60, he left Cleveland for a broader field of effort; and the friends who knew him in his early days rejoiced at his subsequent prosperity, and sincerely mourned his untimely death.

Foolsap Papers.

A Call at the White House.

For a long time I had been thinking to call upon the President, and pay me his respects, but my wife could get no hired girl and I could not go. Knowing the P. would be inconceivable if I did not go, I broke the ties that held me long and started for the Capital.

I wore on this occasion, my white plug hat, which was willed to me by my venerable grandfather, with the stipulation that it should be worn as long as it covered brains. I also wore the gray coat which is seen so often on the street with me in it, and took my carpet-sack, which we used when I was a boy to carry grist to the mill. There was nothing at all in the bag, but then I hold that it doesn't look genteel to travel without baggage of some kind, whether you have any thing to put in it or not; besides, a carpet-sack is good hotel currency. I was accompanied, also, with my umbrella. All these things had seen service, in fact, were veterans, very suitable for the occasion, as the President is a veteran, and has seen service himself.

On arriving at the White House I went to usher myself in, but was stopped by a servant who stood at the door, and looked big. He asked me what I wanted, as he grabbed my arm. I knocked him down, and told him I'd tell him what I wanted when he came to. The President was seated alone at a table, writing, with a cigar in his mouth. He looked up in fifteen minutes, and said, very feelingly:

"Excuse me for disturbing you, see you?"

"My dear Mr. President, you are certainly no more astonished than I am to see you!"

"But," said he, "you didn't send your card."

"No," said I, "General; I left my deck at home."

"Ah, I recollect now; you're the new gardener I expected this morning."

"No, no, Mr. President; I'm Whitehorn, an humble name of which you have no doubt heard of and read about when you went anywhere. What time do you dine, General?"

"Generally at two o'clock."

"Well," said I, taking a fifty cent cigar out of a box on the table, and reaching for the President's cigar to light it by; "well, I tried not to be too late, as I didn't want to put your wife to the trouble of getting an extra dinner. I like to be punctual, especially at the table of my friends. At my own house the latch-string is always out" (so are the victims); and then I sat down and put my feet up on the marble mantel-piece, and they contrasted visibly with the alabaster vases beside them.

"I have a corn on that foot, General, that troubles me a great deal. I suppose you don't have them?"

"Corn? Sixty acres, sir, on my Missouri estate" was his energetic rejoinder.

"Well, General, while we are waiting for dinner, and as I have nothing else to do in the mean time, allow me to give some of my views on some of the vexed questions of the day."

"The Alabama claims don't cover all that I would expect from England, and I would suggest some amendments for you to insert."

"1st. Indemnity for the abuse of George Francis Train, who, as a free American citizen, was obliged to suffer martyrdom inside of brick walls, merely for the boldness of abusing the British lion to his face."

"2d. Indemnity for blowing cannon from the Sepoy's mouths in India."

"3d. Indemnity for the unnecessary slaughter of the Prussians at the battle of Dorking."

"4th. Indemnity for the murder of the King of England, and Mary queen of Scots."

"5th. The British empire to be abolished. The kingdom to be divided in two parts, both parts to go to the United States. The money in the Bank of England to be used toward pensioning every man in the United States, irrespective of sex. The inhabitants of London to be moved to New York so as to enlarge the latter city."

The British Islands to be used as a coaling station for our navy, and the B. lion to have his tail cut off. This, I believe, Mr. President, would equalize things a little better, and satisfy Ben Butler's crooked eye.

"By the way, my cow is the mother of a fine calf."

"My wife has continually been soliciting me to be a candidate for the presidency. My long management of the affairs of our country peculiarly fits me for it. My wife would be vice-president, to fill the presidential chair while I would be away, and also when I would be at home. But I have declined, as I learn you will be out again; though, to speak the truth, General, I feel perfectly at home in the White House. How soon will dinner be ready? Tell the folks I generally have onions for dinner, also Rhine wine, and port without the rhine. If you have some handy now, I'll—"

Just here the usher announced several major-generals, but, as the President was asleep, I sent word for them to call in the morning, two days later.

When he woke up we went to dinner, where my conversation was purely diplomatic. I remarked that our cold weather caused a glorious diminution of flies; spoke of the good bread my wife gets at the baker's; told them how many meals I could make a napkin last, which perfectly surprised them. After dinner I entertained the President with a two hours' talk, with much advice. He said all I had said was like pouring water in a rat-hole, by which he meant it all went down. I got the promise of the next paymaster's place who should graduate for the penitentiary, and left, telling the P. that I wanted to get off on the next train. He said he hoped I wouldn't be disappointed. Told him I'd call again soon.

Yours kindly,
WASHINGTON WHITEHORN.

A BAD HABIT.

It has been most aptly said that we, as a people, read too much, and think about what we read too little; the consequence is that most of the people we meet know something in a superficial way about almost every thing. Daniel Webster, who had a rich store of information on almost every subject of general interest, said that it had been his habit for years to reflect for a short time on whatever he read, and so fix the thoughts and ideas worth remembering in his mind. Any one who does this will find how retentive his memory will become, and how long after reading an interesting article the best portions of it will remain with him.

Readers and Contributors.

TO CONTRIBUTORS.—No MSS. received that are not fully prepaid in postage.—No MSS. preserved for future orders.—Unusable MSS. promptly returned only where stamps accompany the manuscript, for each return.—Book MSS. postage is two cents for every copy sent, or fraction thereof, but must be marked "Book MSS."—No correspondence of any nature is permissible in a package marked as "Book MSS."—MSS. which are hurried, are not used or wanted. In all cases our choice rests first upon merit or fitness; second, upon excellence of MS. as "copy;" third, length. Of two MSS. of equal merit we always prefer the shorter.—Never write on both sides of a sheet. Use Commercial Note size paper as most convenient to editor and compositor, bearing off each page as it is written, and enclosing gloves in full or page number.—Accepted by no means implies a want of merit. Many MSS. unsuitable to us are well worthy of use.—All experienced and popular writers will find us ever ready to give their offerings early attention.—Contributors must look to this column for all information in regard to contributions. We can not write letters except in special cases.

We shall have to say no to the following contributions, viz.: "Nelly Dee," Dorothea Crabtree's Christmas; "The Bookman's Story;" "The Midnight Peril;" "How She Won Him;" "The Princess of Hearts;" "A Love Life;" "Heaven;" "My Friend, Patsy;" "In Memoriam;" "Last Appeal;" "The Parson of Grassy Hollow."

We put aside for use, at some future time, "Blowing Bubbles;" "Story of a Lamp-post;" "Grace, Greene's Last Flirtation;" "The Romance of Great Britain, Raucher;" "The Bachelor's Three Treatments;" "Pie Upon You;" "Yes or No;" "Bright Eyes."

T. F. H. We do not remember the name.

FRANK G. You can not get your work for the press. Some knowledge of orthography, grammar, and of the technicalities of composition are highly essential requisites.

"A Temperance Sketch" is wholly worthless as a composition. Author will please send and powder over what is said above to Frank G.

HOWARD. It is too late to plant bulbs for spring bloom. Hyacinths are perfectly hardy. Send to Vick, of Rochester, for his new catalogue; it gives all desired information on flower culture.

EFFIE GORDON. Charlotte Cushman never was married. She is now about seventy years of age. Her present stage appearance probably will be her last. She is truly a remarkably old woman.

T. M. The "Internationals" is a semi-secret organization, of highly revolutionary ideas regarding human rights and property. It is a radical Fourteeners in one sense—that of believing all property as non-exclusive, but propose, as a specialty, to so readjust society that no one man shall have preference or prominence over another. The whole scheme is not at all new. It has existed in almost all ages, but obtains special prominence in this decade when society generally—especially political society—is undergoing so many changes.

NIGHT RANGER. There is no "regular price" for literary work. Each scrip is paid for according to merit and availability. Authors are not able, even in the case of those with good names, to dictate terms to publishers. They have to take what they can get. The American publisher is a hard fellow, and to the imported article. All monthly magazines in this country, save one or two, are running English serials. When American authors offer a serial, the publisher, blundering and all, says, "no room for you." This will be changed some of these days, when our Congress is wise enough to pass an international copyright law.

G. E. G. The "Tailor Bird" is a native of India, and is so named on account of using his needle-like bill in fastening leaves together and making them into a nest.

GEORGE F. The Roman Catholics have built a cathedral in Peking, China, that overlooks the palace.

MARY GEORGE. You should not repeat what you have heard in social intimacy, in the presence of the public, otherwise you would be treacherous to those who had trusted you; if not treacherous, it is foolish, to say the least.

MATTIE KNOWLES. We believe that Vermont has been the residence of more persons who have reached the age of one hundred years, than any other State in the Union.

MONROE. Skin-clasp caps are fashionable this season for young misses, and are worn a great deal by our school-girls, who are assured that they are exceedingly becoming to their different styles of beauty.

MAUD LAWRENCE. Ermine is the handsomest "fur" that can be worn by children.

THEOPHORE JAMES. The next kin to the throne of England after the present king, is the Duke of Wales, his eldest son, now seven years of age.

BACKWOODSMAN. A little straw placed in your shoes will cause friction, and add greatly to the warmth of your feet.

NANNIE MOSBY. Southern ladies ride more on horseback than do the ladies of the North, but it is *vice versa* as regards driving themselves in phaetons.

MOLLIE F. GROOMAN. It is too true that many of our ladies, both married and single, attended the balls given to the Grand Duke, Alexis, with their dresses cut *indelicately* low in the neck. Women can not expect that gentlemen will respect them when they show such a total disregard of self-respect, as they do in appearing in public with dresses so scant as to leave little for imagination.

Unanswered questions on hand will appear next week.

"By far the best stories of our Wild Western life which have ever been presented in our popular journalism."—*Lafayette Gas.*

Our Wild Western Life.

In its pursuit of attractions the SATURDAY JOURNAL has secured, among other admirable productions, a very interesting and attractive series of papers by the noted Hunter-author,

CAPTAIN J. F. C. ADAMS,

("YOUNG BRUNN ADAMS,")

consisting of character sketches, or life episodes in the adventures and doings of Boone, Crockett, Kit Carson, Ben Hardin, etc., etc. Hunter as Captain Adams is, by taste and experience, he has, by camp-fire and on the trail, learned a great many things regarding the celebrated hunters and scouts named, and in his own graphic manner repeats them. They will greatly please.

From the same hand we have another series, viz.:

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE WEST,

which will prove of rare interest and real value, comprising, as they will, many strange and exciting stories of the border and early settlements.

Of the ever-welcome Ralph Ringwood—now, alas! passed away forever—I have a new installment to offer of his already much talked of

CAMP-FIRE YARNS.

Which have been such a pleasing feature of this journal for the past year. Ralph Ringwood writes exclusively for us, and has made for himself a reputation which will long keep his memory green. The new series will comprise some of the best things he ever wrote. We also have, from his hand, a number of

TALES OF THE BORDER,

which are more nearly related to the early history of Ohio, Kentucky, etc., and contain some deeply-absorbing narratives illustrative of the people and days of the settlements.

As announced elsewhere, we have a new star in

MAJOR MAX MARTINE,

EX-SIOUX CHIEF, FREE TRAPPER AND GUIDE,

upon whose remarkable experiences we shall draw for a succession of tales, sketches, adventures, etc., etc., that will prove as attractive as any thing we have yet given our readers—which is saying much. The SATURDAY JOURNAL has

OVER THE SEA.

BY T. C. HARRAUGH.

I stood in the gloaming. A being fair
Came unto me—
Came from the land where the angels are—
Over the sea.

Whither, oh, seraph, dost thou roam?
Whisper to me
Why didst leave thy sinless home
Over the sea?

"I fly," she whispered in my ear,
Earthward—
I come to carry a loved one dear
Over the sea.

"Tis I, 'tis I, thou seekest afar:
No further flee!
I long to dwell in yonder star,
Over the sea.

But the angel cried, as she winged her way,
I seek not thee.
Wait! Thy angel will come some day,
From o'er the sea.

I've waited long on Time's lone shore,
Angel for thee,
Come! bear the lone one, loved of yore,
Over the sea!

The Dark Secret: The Mystery of Fontelle Hall.

BY COUSIN MAY CARLETON.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

A WOMAN'S NATURE.

"I am a woman—say, a woman wronged!
And when our sex from injuries take fire,
Our softness turns to fury, and our thoughts
Breathe vengeance and destruction."

The loud ringing of the breakfast-bell was the first thing that awoke Captain Alfred Disbrowe on the morning of his departure. For hours after his parting with Jacquetta, he had paced up and down his room, too miserable and angry to go to bed; and it was only when the sky began to grow red in the east that he had flung himself down, dressed and all, and dropped into a feverish slumber.

He awoke with a strange feeling of loneliness and heaviness of heart, and it was some minutes before he could call to mind the cause. Then it came back to him with a shock and a thrill, that this was the last morning he would ever spend in Fontelle—the last time he would ever see Jacquetta. There was an inexpressible bitterness in the thought, now that the excitement of the previous night had passed away; and he dropped his head on his hand with something like a groan. Her image was before him, bright, radiant, the slight, fairy form, the small, tantalizing, bewitching face; the laughing, mocking, dark-gray eyes; the saucy, provoking smile; the round, polished, boyish forehead; the short, flashing, dancing curls, that shone before his eyes, now, as the most charming curls in existence; the whole-spirited, daring, sparkling little countenance of the intoxicating little siren, all arose, as if to madden him in their most bewildering array. He looked up at the smiling eyes and sweet, beautiful lips of the portrait above him, and remembered he had lost it all. Again his head dropped, and a cry that would not be repressed broke from his lips:

"Oh, Jacquetta! my love! my life! my dream! This—this is what I have lost!"

There was a knock at the door. He lifted his head, brushed back the heavy locks of his falling hair, and said:

"Come in."

Frank entered. He reminded Disbrowe of the first day of his arrival, when he had paid him a similar visit. How short a time had elapsed since then! and yet it had transformed his whole life.

"Why, cousin Alfred, what's the matter?" said Frank. "You look like a ghost."

"I did not sleep well, last night," said Disbrowe, glancing languidly in the glass, and starting to see the pale face it reflected. "Was that the breakfast-bell rung just now?"

"Yes, and as you are generally down so early in the morning, I thought perhaps you had taken a notion to run off in the night, being so late this morning. You didn't turn in with your clothes on, did you? They look as if you had been sleeping in them a week."

"I believe I did," said Disbrowe, smiling faintly. "I was up until daybreak. Are my uncle and cousins down-stairs?"

There was a vague hope at his heart that he might see Jacquetta again, in spite of what she had told him; and he listened eagerly for Frank's answer.

"No," said that young gentleman, "Jack's gone. She was off this morning for London, to visit one of these poor laborers who got both his legs crushed to pieces last evening—poor fellow! She would have went last night, I believe, only Lightning had lost a shoe."

With a sickening feeling of disappointment, Disbrowe arose and proceeded to arrange his disordered dress and brush his disheveled hair. So intense and bitter was the sensation, that it was some moments before he could trust himself to speak.

"Jack's a regular card-sharper—angel to one-half these poor people," continued Frank, now, as ever, disposed to sing the praises of his favorite, and quite unconscious that every word of praise was like a dagger to the heart of his cousin. "Let her hear of an accident, even though it should be fifty miles off, and if she thought she could be of the least service, she would be up and off in a twinkling, in spite of wind and weather. I remember once, when the typhus fever was raging at Green Creek, and carrying off the people in scores, and scarcely took time to sleep or eat, but went from cottage to cottage, night and day. Uncle told her she was mad, and tried to prevail on her not to risk her life; but she wouldn't listen to him a moment. Her duty lay there, she said, and there she must be. For over four months, she never came to Fontelle, for fear of bringing the contagion; and I do believe she saved the lives of one-half the poor people there. Uncle gave her plenty of money; and, by George! if she didn't spend it!"

"And did she escape herself?"

"Oh, no! she took it when almost everybody else was well; but she recovered again. Her hair all fell out, too, and it has never grown long since."

"And this is what I have lost," again thought Disbrowe, in bitterness of spirit. "This is the girl I have called heartless—this entrancing fairy, with the heart of a hero and an angel! Oh, Jacquetta! what have I done that I should lose you?"

"What's the matter?" said Frank, curiously. "Something more than a bad night's

rest, I'll be bound! You look as if you had lost your best friend."

"So I have!" said Disbrowe, passionately. "Oh, what? Why, cousin Alfred, is Lord Earncliffe dead?"

"Not as I know of. I hope not."

"Then what the—! I thought he was, by your saying that."

"Never mind, Frank; you are five years too young to understand what I mean. Heaven grant you never may understand it!"

Frank looked at him an instant with a peculiar smile, and then began to whistle, with piercing emphasis, the grand march in "Norma."

Disbrowe paused in his occupation, and looked at him a moment with a singular expression.

"You, too, Frank," he said, with a slight smile; "are you in the secret, too?"

"What secret?" said Frank, with a look of innocent unconsciousness. "Don't understand, Captain Disbrowe. I'm five years too young to know any secrets."

Captain Disbrowe returned to his toilet.

"I forgot you were a Yankee, and consequently wide-awake. Has Jacquetta—his face flushed as he uttered her name—"told you anything?"

"No. What would she tell me? I don't understand you at all, cousin Alfred."

Frank's look of resolute simplicity was refreshing to see. Disbrowe made an impatient gesture.

"You understand well enough. Out with it!"

"Well, then, I know you're in love with our Jack," blurted out Master Frank, thrusting both hands in his pockets. "All of my own knowledge, too; if I am five years too young to know any thing."

Exactly youth was a sore spot with Frank, like all boys'ambitions. He thought of Disbrowe's face grew crimson one moment and whiter than ever the next. He went on dressing without speaking a word, and Frank, evidently possessed by some spirit of evil, continued, undauntedly:

"And I know she refused you, too—you and your coronet, Captain Disbrowe, as she has many a bet—another man. Oh, our Jack's not to be had for a word, I can tell you! The man that gets her must do something more than pay her compliments, or give her flowers, or say sweet things by moonlight."

"What must he do? Take lance and shield, and ride forth, booted and spurred, like a second Don Quixote, in search of adventures; conquer a fiery dragon, or rescue some hapless prince from the enchanted castle of some gigantic ogre?" said Disbrowe, between anger and sarcasm.

"Yes, sir—ee!" exclaimed Frank, defiantly. "If such things were to be done now, the man that would lay claim to her pretty little hand would have to prove his knight-hood before he would kneel at her foot-stool. As it is, the man that comes after her will have to mind his P's and Q's before he gets her; for Jack De Vere is no common milk-and-water young lady, but worth half the women in the world—queens and princesses included—rolled into one."

"That is all, doubtless, very true," said Disbrowe, with a curling lip; "but I fancy I know some one who—"

He paused abruptly, and bit his lip.

"Oh, you may go on. I know who you mean. You think she's in love with Jacinto—don't you?" said Frank, sarcastically.

"Really, Master Frank, you seem in a catechising mood this morning," said Disbrowe, facing round and fixing his dark eyes full upon him. "Supposing we drop this subject. Our friend, Miss Jacquetta, might not thank either of us for so free a use of her name."

Frank blushed at the rebuke, which he could not help feeling he deserved, and in a spirit of retaliation began humming: "A frog he would a wooing go," as they left the room.

Disbrowe smiled as he heard him; and, letting his hand fall on his shoulder, said, cordially: "Come, Master Frank, it is not worth while for you and I to disagree, as this is the last morning I will ever trouble you. We must part friends, my dear boy."

"That we shall, cousin Alfred!" exclaimed Frank, shaking earnestly the proffered hand; "and I do like you first rate, and I wish you had got Jack. Now, then!"

"Thank you! but your wish comes rather too late; I am not likely to win such a prize in Love's lottery. Tell her, Frank," he said, with a look of strange earnestness in his dark, handsome eyes, "to forget all I may have said to offend her; and tell her that my best wishes go with her and whoever may be so fortunate as to win the heart and hand she refused me. Tell her this, Frank, my dear fellow, since I am not destined to see her again."

Frank wrung his hand silently, for his voice at that moment was not altogether under his command.

Both entered the breakfast parlor together, where Augusta, Jacinto, and Mr. De Vere sat awaiting them.

Augusta sat the same figure of stone that she always was of late; but the change the past few days had wrought in her never struck Disbrowe so forcibly as it did this morning. She had lost flesh and life, and color; she was but the shadow of her former self. Her tall, stately form was wasted and thin; her cheeks hollow; her lofty brow death-like in its blue-veined pallor; her lips were white; and her hands so pale and wasted that they looked almost transparent. The old story of the vampire sucking the life-blood drop by drop, seemed realized in her case; and oh! the unspeakable depth of desolation and despair in those great, heavy midnight eyes. And something worse than desolation and despair was in that haggard face, now—remorse, undying, devouring remorse—the worm that never sleeps, seemed gnawing her heart—had set his white, fearful seal on that corpse-like face.

She lifted her eyes slowly, as they entered; and meeting his gaze, so full of pity and compassion, the old haughty pride of the De Veres, that even her night of anguish could not quench, sent a momentary fire leaping to her eyes, and a lofty look to the white face that repelled and cast off fiercely all commiseration.

Mr. De Vere put down the book he was reading, and came forward to greet him; and Jacinto, who sat caressing a beautiful little water-spaniel—a pet of Jacquetta's—glanced up and met a look full of angry jealousy from the young Englishman's dark eyes that made him drop his own and flush to the temples.

Mr. De Vere apologized in a few words for Jacquetta's absence; and they all gathered around the breakfast table. The meal passed almost in silence, and sadly enough, too; for all were thinking it was the last

the young guardsman would partake of beneath that roof; and until that moment they had not known how he had endeavored himself to them. There would be a dreary gap when his tall, gallant form, and gay, handsome young face was gone, that would not be easily filled in the family circle. Had Jacquetta been there, the oppressive silence would soon have been broken! but she was "over the hills and far away," long before this, and doubtless—as Disbrowe thought—forgetful of his very existence.

"Which way do you go?" inquired Mr. De Vere, at length—making an effort at something like conversation.

"I will call at the Mermaid, and take passage from there in some schooner, as I go along, which, I understand, is very fine along the Hudson."

"None better," said Mr. De Vere. "I have climbed the proud Alps, I have sailed down the Rhine, as the song has it, but I have never seen any thing to surpass this new country scenery. You ought to see these American forests in autumn, decked in their Joseph's coat of many colors. You would never forget it. It goes ahead of Old England completely in that point."

"I have always understood it was very fine," said Disbrowe; "but, unhappily, I will not be able to see it. I hope to be shooting in Fontelle woods before that."

The door opened as he spoke, and a servant appeared with a startled face.

"Well, Reynolds?" said Mr. De Vere, looking up.

"She's here again, sir!" cried Reynolds, excitedly, "and she won't go away, all we can do. She says she will see you, in spite of us all!"

"Who are you talking about?—who is she?" Don't be so incoherent, Reynolds!"

"It's old Mother Howlet, sir, if you please—and there's a man along with her—and she won't go away."

Angusta uttered a faint exclamation, and sunk back in her chair.

Mr. De Vere arose, his face flushed with anger.

"Mother Howlet! How dare she come here! Order her away, Reynolds, and say I will not see her."

"We have, sir, but she won't go. The man along with her has got a pistol, and he says he will shoot the first of us that tries to keep them out."

"Who is the fellow?"

"Don't know, sir. He's a short, thick-set man, with red hair and whiskers, and a savage face."

"Captain Nick Tempest," simultaneously exclaimed Jacinto, Disbrowe, and Frank.

"The fellow who tried to shoot you that evening Jacinto was wounded?" asked Mr. De Vere.

"That's same."

"Really," said Mr. De Vere, angry, "Fontelle seems to be a rendezvous for desperadoes of late. Come, Reynolds, I will go with you to this worthy pair, and we will see if they can not be got rid of."

"You had better be careful, my dear sir," said Disbrowe, anxiously. "This Captain Tempest is a most sanguinary villain, and capable of any crime, I believe."

Then he will find that Fontelle is not in the habit of sheltering sanguinary villains, nor its master of being belittled into listening to what they have to say."

And, preceded by Reynolds, Mr. De Vere left the room.

"What the dickens can bring those two here?" exclaimed the astonished Frank.

"That is a question I can not take it upon myself to answer," said Disbrowe; "for no good, you may safely swear. They must have the audacity of the old demon himself to come here. Are you ill, Miss Augusta? You look alarmed."

"Oh, no."

She was sitting gazing at the door, with a look so strained and unnatural that it startled them. Jacinto, too, was white, as if with apprehension, and shrunk from the eyes of all. Moment after moment passed—a quarter of an hour went by, but still Mr. De Vere did not return.

"What can detain uncle?" exclaimed Frank. "They can't have done any thing to him, can they? Suppose I ring and see?"

No one objected; and, seizing the bell-pull, he rung a peal that presently brought Reynolds into the room.

"Have those two old tramps gone?" asked Frank.

"No, Master Frank; they're both here yet."

"The dickens they are! Where's uncle?"

"In the morning-parlor with Mother Howlet."

"Oh! ginger!" exclaimed the overwhelmed Frank. "There's a piece of news! Where's Captain Tempest?"

"Sitting in the hall, smoking."

"Smoking! there's coolness for you, ladies and gents! You may go, Reynolds."

Reynolds bowed and withdrew, and the quartet looked at each other in silent amazement. Augusta leaned on her elbow, and dropped her head on her hand, but not before they seen how fearfully agitated her face was. Jacinto, alternately pale and red, got up and sat down, and seemingly could rest no where. Captain Disbrowe looked calmly surprised, and Master Frank gave vent to his feelings by whistling, and with his hands in his pockets marched up and down the room to the tune of the "Rogue's March."

An hour passed, and all were wrought up to a state of almost intolerable suspense. "I wish uncle would come—I do wish he would," Frank had repeated for the fiftieth time, when at last the door was opened, and Mr. De Vere entered, closely followed by Grizzle Howlet and Captain Nick Tempest. A score of questions were on Frank's lips; but they froze there, as he looked to his uncle's face. The stern and relentless face of an outraged Spartan father, carved in marble, might have looked as his did at that moment. A dusky fire was in his eye, and his lips were compressed as in a vice. The faces of Captain Nick and his fair friend bore an unmistakable look of triumphant malice, as they coolly helped themselves to seats. Captain Nick bowed politely all around, in bland amiability—even to Disbrowe; for there is nothing makes us more amiable for the time being than the consciousness that we are about to have complete revenge. Augusta shook in mortal terror from meeting the eye of old Grizzle, and shrunk away in a recess of the window, shaking like one in an ague-fit. A sinister smile parted the thin lips of that lady, as she saw it; and she exchanged an exultant look with the gallant commander of the "Fly-by-Night."

"Frank," said Mr. De Vere, turning to his nephew, "do you know in what particular direction Jacquetta has gone?"

Frank started and stared. There was a sharp ringing tone in his uncle's voice, that was never heard there save when his anger was at its height. It was seldom Mr. De Vere was really angry; but when he was, he was almost relentless in his stern passion.

"No sir—that is, yes sir—she has gone to Red Rock."

"Do you know what time she will return?"

"No sir, perhaps not before night."

Mr. De Vere seized the bell, and rung furiously. Reynolds again appeared.

"Reynolds, go and tell William to saddle Firefly—that is the fastest horse, I believe—and bring him round, instantly, to the front door!"

Reynolds flew to obey, wondering inwardly what was up, and then, turning to the astonished Frank, said, peremptorily: "Mount instantly, and be off for Jacquetta! Tell her she is to return with you immediately—instantly, mind! Lose not a moment going or coming! Go!"

Frank started to his feet, more in dismay than in obedience; but there was that in his uncle's face that repelled inquiry, and extorted compliance.

"Just tell her I want her! You need not say who is here. It is as well to take her unprepared," he said, lowering his voice.

"That's so, Mr. De Vere," exclaimed Captain Tempest, whose keen ears overheard him.

"Silence, sir," said Mr. De Vere, fiercely. "Learn to hold your tongue when a gentleman speaks!" Then, turning to Frank, he said: "What are you waiting for, sir? be off; and mind, don't let the grass grow under your feet!"

Frank, so violently astonished that he scarcely knew whether he was waking or dreaming, seized his cap, and darted out of the room. Captain Tempest arose, his face red with anger.

"Do you mean to say, sir," he began, turning savagely to Mr. De Vere, when a hand seized his arm, and he was forced back into his chair.

"Why will you be a fool," said Grizzle, angrily, in Spanish; "sit down and wait! Your revenge is coming!"

A moment's silence fell on all. Captain Tempest scowled. Mr. De Vere walked to the window, and stood like a statue, and Disbrowe pulled out his watch, and looked at the hour.

"Time I was off," he said, starting up. "My dear uncle, can I see you a moment in private, before I go?"

"You must postpone your journey for to-day, Alfred," said his uncle, imperiously. "There is a certain family affair to be discussed here, presently, at which I require your presence. Your journey can wait, so sit down!"

Jacinto started to his feet.

"I will not intrude," he said; "I will go."

"You will stay!" interposed Mr. De Vere, sternly. "Sit down, sir; perhaps we may find your presence necessary before we have done!"

The boy turned white, even to his lips.

"I beg, sir," he began, falteringly; but Mr. De Vere turned almost fiercely upon him.

"Sit down, sir! You shall do as I tell you. Perhaps we may make you give a better account of yourself before you go! Sit down!"

The lad reeled, and fell back into a seat, like one fainting.

All this time Augusta had cowered in her seat, shuddering, trembling, collapsed. Now she lifted her white face, and rising to her feet, she turned to Grizzle, and gasped rather than said:

"Have you—have you—broken your promise? Have you told—?" her voice died away, and she shivered convulsively.

The old, evil smile came over Grizzle's face, as she fixed her piercing eyes on the young girl's ghastly face, and quietly replied:

"No, Lady Augusta, I have not told! Your secret is safe, at least, for the present; I do not care to blacken my lips just yet by telling it, nor scorch your father's ears by the hearing. Fear not for the present; you are safe."

She sunk back, and dropped her white face in her white hands. Mr. De Vere, standing stern and motionless, as if he heard, heeded not; and Jacinto, whose emotion was evidently one of intense terror—rather surprising in one who a short time before had fearlessly risked his life to save another's—cowered down on his seat, and did not dare to look up, while a streak of dark red at intervals flashed across his dark face. Disbrowe, astonished and troubled, yet with a heart thrilling at the thought that he was to see Jacquetta again, looked uneasily from face to face. Old Grizzle, with her gray cloak folded closely around her, sat with a grim, sinister smile glittering in her snake-like eyes, and wrinkling her thin lips. And Captain Tempest, lolling back in his chair, elevated his legs on another, clapping a wedge of the Virginia weed in his mouth, stuck his hands in his coat-pockets, and looked the very picture of nonchalance and high-bred self-possession.

And hours passed!

(To be continued—commenced in No. 87.)

The Red Rajah:
THE SCOURGE OF THE INDIES.
A TALE OF THE MALAYAN ISLES.
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CHAPTER XII.
DON GREGORIO RODRIGUEZ.

JOHN EARLE, ESQUIRE, head of the Singapore branch of the house of Earle, Hoskins & Co., sat in his counting-room on a Monday morning. The counting-room was a long, dark apartment, situated in the basement-story of the immense warehouses of the firm.

Being partly underground, and surrounded by very thick walls, this room was quite delightful in its coolness. What in our climate would have been a gloomy dungeon, under the equator, or nearly, became a pleasant retreat.

Mr. Earle sat in a huge cane rocker, an importation from the San Francisco branch of the house (under Rufus B. Hoskins' superintendence).

He was examining an enormous ledger, which lay on his knees, and whose pages appeared to interest him far more than the

last new novel would have pleased his daughter.

"E. H. & Co., Bankers, Brokers, and Merchants," was written or printed on the back of a row of books, that showed their gilded titles in goodly numbers, from the shelves of the open safe that stood before Mr. Earle.

"H'm!" muttered the old gentleman, as he turned over the leaves; "it ain't so very bad for a year's business. Them blasted Chinese may kick up all the hobby they please about opium, but it's a money-making trade. 'Ow I would like to do the 'ole of it. H'm! Hindigo. Thirty-five cargoes. That ain't bad for a single 'ouse. But then one can't make sich money at that as they used to. More's the pity. 'Backer. That's the boy for me! 'Ow many 'undred-weight 'ave I sold of that 'ere stuff in hold Hindigo! They may call it cabbage, as much as they please, but I notices they smokes the 'real Manila cheroots' 'all over Hindia. And vot's more, we're the lads as sells 'em. What's this 'ere? Cabalero, Rodriguez & Co.'s account. That's pretty 'eavy. But then we makes so much out of them, that we can afford to pay it. Cheroots cost us about a 'penny, and we sells 'em in Calcutta for fippence, Bombay sixpence, and a shilling in Lunnon. 'Wish I did about ten million a year in tobacco, instead of a few 'undred thousands. 'Ello! Wot's the matter, 'Ardy?"

This query was addressed to his book-keeper, Mr. Hardy, who entered from the outer store, bearing a small card.

"A Spanish gentleman wants to see you, sir."

Mr. Earle inspected the card very carefully through his glasses. It was a very tiny card, and the name was engraved in such a fine Italian hand as to be almost invisible. Mr. Earle puzzled over it in vain, till his clerk, with younger eyes, came to his help.

"Why the doose can't the blasted foreigner 'ave his name printed plain?" grumbled the merchant. "Well, 'Ardy, 'oo is it?"

"Don Gregorio Rodriguez," read out Hardy, slowly.

"Eh! God bless my soul! You don't say so?" exclaimed Mr. Earle, hurriedly jumping up to put away his ledger. "Why, 'Ardy, 'ere's the 'ead of the 'ouse at Cabalero, Rodriguez & Co., of Manila. Old Cabalero's dead, but they keep 'is name up still. Show 'im in, 'Ardy—show 'im in. That feller grows more 'backer, and sugar, and 'emp, than any one I know. Show 'im in, 'Ardy, and mind you, be 'orful civil. We howe 'is 'ouse a pile of money."

Hardy disappeared, and Mr. Earle bustled about the dingy office, making things straight for his respected visitor. He shut the safe, and drew up a second rocking-chair close to a large table, strewn with books, bills of lading, and loose letters.

In a few minutes more Hardy entered, ushering in a tall gentleman, whom he announced as "Don Gregorio Rodriguez."

Mr. Earle rushed forward with overpowering hospitality.

"My dear Don Gregorio, so 'appy to see you. 'Ardy, 'and a chair to Don Gregorio. A hold friend of our 'ouse, like you, is always welcome. 'Ardy, tell 'em to send in some of them hiced Yankee drinks at once. My dear Don Gregorio, 'ow 'appy I am to see you."

The tall gentleman had allowed his hand to rest in that of the merchant, quite impassively. He now spoke in a singularly soft and deep voice, with a very marked foreign accent.

"Thank you, sare, I am afraid I shall put you to so much trouble. Pray do not discommode yourself."

"No trouble at all, sir," responded the hospitable Earle. "Urny up! 'Ardy. Be 'off!"

Hardy vanished; and Mr. Earle finally got his visitor settled in one of the American rockers, near the window, where he could look at him.

Don Gregorio Rodriguez was about as strong a contrast to the plithoric, mercantile Earle, as you could imagine. He did not look the least like a merchant.

He was exceedingly tall, and rather slightly built, but as graceful in every movement as a panther. His face was strikingly handsome, although nearly as brown as an Indian's.

His eyes were dark and luminous, and his short, curling hair and drooping mustache were as black as the raven's wing.

Don Gregorio did not appear to feel the heat in the slightest. He was dressed in a full suit of closely-fitting black, the frock buttoned across. The only summery thing about the don was his broad-brimmed Panama hat, which Mr. Earle, learned in such matters, mentally pronounced to be "worth five hundred dollars, if a cent."

The Englishman's eyes were also attracted to the studs glittering in the immaculate shirt-front of the Spanish gentleman. Each of them was a solitaire diamond, as large as a pea.

"Worth ten thousand pound apiece, I'll bet," mentally ejaculated Mr. Earle, as he gazed.

The Spanish gentleman opened the conversation, as he lay back in the cool chair, languidly and handsomely.

"Do you object to de smoking of one leetle cheroot on your office, Senor Earle?" he asked, languidly.

"Not in the least, don—not in the least," blurted out the puffy merchant. "Smoke by all means. We know what kind of cheroots you 'ave in your 'ouse. Eh, Don?"

And Mr. Earle chuckled obsequiously.

Don Gregorio produced from his breast-pocket a small case of exquisite beauty, so thickly incrustated with jewels that old Earle could not restrain a cry of admiration.

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match and lighted his cheroot, first handing the light to the other.

Mr. Earle, worshipful wealth. If Don Gregorio had ordered him to black his boots, I believe he would have done it. To be on terms of such easy familiarity with this princely-looking stranger perfectly intoxicated the old plebeian. He sat, enjoying the fragrance of the best Manila he had ever smoked, and mentally adoring the Spaniard, till Hardy re-entered, with a boy bearing a salver of sherry-cobblers.

Don Gregorio was graciously pleased to imbibe a cobbler and smile approvingly. Then Mr. Earle opened the conversation with a nervous laugh.

"I suppose, ha! ha! Don Gregorio, that your visit here is partly on account of the balance owing your 'ouse, eh? It's pretty heavy this year, I know; but, thank Heaven, Earle Oskins & Co. ain't obliged to ask credit for their balances. 'Ow will you 'ave it?"

The fact was, that Mr. Earle was at the time a little pinched for ready money, and as the balance due Caballero, Rodriguez & Co., was for a whole year's sales, amounting to several cargoes of tobacco, he hated desperately to pay it.

Don Gregorio waved a slender hand daintily. Mr. Earle saw the sparkle of a single diamond on the little finger.

"Do not trouble yourself, señor," he said, languidly; "I do not come down on de business. I leave all dat to my *tenedor de libros*—pardon, my book-keeper. He veel make de draft, I suppose, in de usual manner. I come on de pleasure. I have not been out from Manila for many years. I come to see de great world once more; and I call first on de old house dat have our beez-ness for so long."

Mr. Earle seized the other's hand with effusion.

"You do me proud, Don Gregorio," he said; "and I'm artfully glad to see you. You mustn't think of stoppin' in these 'ere beastly 'otels in the town. They ain't fit to put a 'og in. You must come with me to my little place in the country, and be comfortable. 'Taint a rich palace like you lives in, Don Gregorio, I know; but I can promise you a 'arty welcome and a pretty fair dinner, if I do say it, as shouldn't I?"

The don smiled blandly.

"I shall be very happy, señor," he answered; "but I am not reduced to de hotels for my quar-tairs. I did come in my own prahu from Manila. She is my—vot you call yacht, I think."

"And did you really sail all the way here in a native prahu?" asked Mr. Earle, in astonishment.

"And why not, señor. I have make her under my own sup-pur-vee-sion, and she is swift as de very wind."

"She need be swift to sail through the Sooloo Sea," remarked the merchant; "for that unbraving villain, the Red Rajah, scours it with a fleet of flyers."

A sweet smile lifted the center of Don Gregorio's long mustache, just showing a glimpse of pearly-white teeth.

"He is some great pirate, den, dis Red Rajah," he said; "I hear some people speak of him be-fore."

"I should think they would," returned Earle, testily; "E ought to be by the 'eels over a 'ot fire, 'o ought. The thousands of pounds as our 'ouse, and hotter 'ouses in this 'ere place 'as lost, is incredible, owing to that werry villain. But we smoked 'im at last, 'ang 'im!"

The Spaniard blew a ring of smoke from his lips, and inquired:

"Indeed? I am so ignorant of all dis, you know. You veel pardon me for asking, how did you smoke 'em, as you call 'em?"

"All of us merchants 'as 'ad lost by 'im, we chartered a brig and sent 'er a-cruisin' after 'im. A young Yankee feller took the command, and we gave 'im some of them 'undred-shooters, the Yankees is so proud of—them Gatling guns. 'Oskins, of our 'ouse, consigned 'em 'ers, but Lor' bless you, we couldn't sell 'em. They cooked the Rajah's goose, though, 'ang 'im!"

"And deed you hear, den, dat dis Red Rajah was keeled?" asked the Spaniard, in a tone of haughty interest.

"Not exactly 'keeled,'" admitted Earle; "but the Avenger found out his favorite 'aunt, burnt his 'ouse over de 'eads of the slaves as 'e left be 'ind, and stole a lot of 'is treasures. And dat ain't the best of 'is, neither. There's a 'ole squadron of men-o'-war in the 'arbor now, as is goin' to start for them hislands to-morrow, and clear 'bout hevery pirate of the 'ole lot."

"Dat ez ver' good news," said Don Gregorio, smiling; "what pity is it that Senor Colorado Rajah can not be informed of de amiable in-tentions of heez friends at Singapore. How he would tank zem!"

And the handsome Rodriguez laughed, in a low, musical tone.

"Veel you not take anoder cheroot?" he added; "dey are only made of de very best tobacco on our planta-tion. We keep de one field dat grow dem for our own private smokeing. A light! Certainlee."

After a few moments, smoking, Don Gregorio inquired:

"And dis Red Rajah—you call heem—was any teeny cise brought away from his place? Was eet only his money dey stole?"

"No one stole any thing, Don Gregorio," said the merchant, testily; "it's no stealing to take from a pirate, is it?"

"Pardon, señor," said the Spaniard, blandly; "I do not speak de Eengleesh ver' well. I meastake de word. But did dey take any thing else but money?"

Mr. Earle chuckled and rubbed his hands.

"That's the best of it! Don Gregorio! That's the best of it! You must know that there was a little French girl on the hisland, whom the Rajah had saved from a wreck, once on a time. A most romantic story she 'ad. Well, it so 'appened that our young Yankee had been on the same vessel once, with the little girl. And so she knew 'im, and ran away with 'im. The Rajah must 'a been awful fond of 'er. She was dressed like a princess, and brought away enough valuables, of her hown, to be worth ten thousand pounds."

"Indeed?" was all Don Gregorio said.

"And all that was 'er hown, as the Rajah 'ad given 'er. She wouldn't take any thing else but 'er hown."

"She was a dear, good little girl," remarked the don.

"A little fool, I call 'er," said the merchant. "Wasn't 'e a robber and a pirate? She hought to 'a taken half she could. I would."

"I do not doubt eet," said Don Gregorio, quietly.

"But the crew of the brig wasn't so doosed honest," old Earle continued. "They cleaned out hevery thing on the hisland, they could lay their 'ands on, and then put a

match to my lord's palace. They couldn't find where 'e'd 'id 'is gold, but they'll 'ave a opportunity when the squadron sails to-morrow. If they don't 'unt up some of the gold of them hislands, it'll be because it ain't there."

The Spaniard laughed again.

"Probablee," he said. "*Porgue no sera en casa*—ah! pardon! I forget again. Because it shall no be in de ha-oose. Si. Si."

Mr. Earle went on with his story:

"They've brought 'er to my 'ouse now, and she and Julia—that's my daughter, don—are as thick as pickpockets. She's a pretty child, but I must say, not 'arf as 'andsome as my Julia. You shall see 'er to-night, Don Gregorio. You'll sleep at my 'ouse, won't you?"

"With de great plee-sure," replied the Spaniard. "I weel bid send word to my vessel and have my *baules*—ah! my trunks I mean—sent to your house. But, tell me, señor, shall I see dees charming leetle maiden at your ha-oose?"

"Certainly, don. I'll introduce you to her, and to my Julia, too, Don Gregorio."

"*Mil Gracias*," returned the other, somewhat absently.

He smoked on silently for several minutes. Presently he inquired:

"At what hour do you drive home?"

"At two o'clock, Don Gregorio. Where shall I 'ave the pleasure of callin' for you?"

"At the dock where de yacht lies," said the Spaniard, rising. "I salute you, señor, and kiss your hands. I will be quite readee den."

In a few moments more the tall, elegant-looking Spanish millionaire was walking out through the spacious warehouse, buttoning one glove with easy negligence, and humming an air from the opera of Fra Diavolo.

Mr. Earle saw his lofty figure swing along the street toward the quay, only a hundred yards off. The long, slender, tapering yards of a prahu betokened Don Gregorio's "queer taste in yachts," as the merchant thought.

But when he came down to see her, in the afternoon, he changed his opinions. Don Gregorio's yacht was the most perfect specimen of marine luxury and beauty he had ever seen. Being formed of two similar shells or canoes, secured to each other by powerful beams, she possessed all the keen swiftness of outline of the prahu captured from the pirate chief so recently.

But, the luxury of her appointments, all blazing with gold, and the fact of her having white sails of the finest duck, sufficiently marked the difference between the pirate's craft and the millionaire's yacht. The crew were attired in Malay fashion, but in dark-blue China silk, and the name *BONITA* was worked in gold across the breasts of their shirts. The captured pirate's prahu, black and dingy-looking, lay not far off—a strange contrast to the "Bonita."

Beyond her again was the Avenger, lying close under the guns of several frigates and steamers, whose "blue-peters," lying at the fore, announced them to be ready for sea. It was the squadron to chase the pirates.

Don Gregorio laughed when Mr. Earle pointed it out to him.

CHAPTER XIII

THE LETTER.

WHEN Don Gregorio had mounted into the buggy in which Mr. Earle was driving, the latter gave some directions to his porter, who accompanied him. The baggage of the Spanish gentleman was put on a light cart, and taken off to the merchant's house, while the buggy itself took a more circuitous route.

Mr. Earle was anxious to show the millionaire all the points of interest in and about Singapore; and it was late in the afternoon when they reached the "Palms," as Mr. Earle styled his villa.

During the ride, Don Gregorio manifested quite a lively interest in the story of the little cast-away, Marguerite de Favannes. When he heard her name, he suddenly remembered that he was well acquainted with her aunt in Pondicherry.

"I do know Madame de Choiseul very well," he said. "I have a letter from her to myself, in which she speak of Marguerite, 'sa niece perdue' she call her. I veel send eet up to her, señor, weeth your kind permission, when we get to de ha-oose."

And, accordingly, a letter, inclosed in one of Mr. Earle's envelopes, and addressed, in a running Italian hand, to Mademoiselle de Favannes, was taken up to the room, where our little Marguerite was just awaking from her afternoon siesta.

The Spanish gentleman retired to his own apartment, to which he was shown by his host, to divest himself of the dust of travel.

As soon as he was left alone, he went to his open window, and sat down behind the Venetians, where he listened intently. The next room to his own, his host told him, was occupied by the distressed damsel. Presently he heard a tap at the door of that room, and a sweet voice from within inquired:

"*Qu'est ce que c'est?*" (What is it?)

Then there was the opening of a door, and the voice of the little Malay page:

"A letter for misses."

"*Merci*," he heard, and then the door closed.

"She has it," muttered Don Gregorio, in English, without a trace of the accent he had assumed before.

Then he rose, and walked noisily about the room, as if to let every one know he was there, and finally sat down to unpack his trunk.

Marguerite, in the next room, with the letter in her hand, was only half awake. She heard the noise, and knew that a stranger was there, but had not opened her letter yet. Suddenly she heard a mellow baritone voice, remarkably sweet in its tones, singing an air that she well knew.

It was the Gironid hymn, "*Mourir pour la patrie*."

Marguerite started when she heard that voice. She knew it well. In an instant she was awake, and began tearing open the letter in her hand.

It ran thus:

"MARGUERITE—You have left me. I know not whether it was willingly or not. I came back to my own happy island, to find Marguerite gone, my people corpses, men, women, and children; my village a heap of ashes. Was this good, Marguerite? They tell me you fled with another man, willingly. Is this true? If it is, you can add one more to the list of ingrates. You can slay me. I am here. You have but to recognize me, to point me out, and hundreds of hands will be raised against the Red Rajah, who has defied them so long. I am come to seek you. I put my life in your hands. If you have any love left for me, pretend not to know me when you see me. I am here in the character of Don Gregorio Rodriguez, a rich planter of Manila, who knows your aunt

Eulalie at Pondicherry. Now, farewell. Be discreet, and all may yet be well.

"SIDAH SAPULON."

When Marguerite had finished reading this letter, she trembled violently.

He was there, the man whom she regarded with such a strange mixture of feelings, now. Was she glad or afraid? She hardly knew which was the uppermost emotion.

She knew, by this time, what he was called in Singapore. She knew that the gorgeous Rajah, whom she knew on the island, was an excommunicated pirate here. She sat trembling, for fear he might be found out, and wondering how she should meet him.

And she knew that he was in the next room, too, for did she not hear his voice?

Marguerite sat hesitating and trembling, till the clang of the bell, down below, gave token that it was time to dress for dinner.

She hurried through with her toilet, and while still engaged in it, heard the door of the next room opened, and the light step of the stranger going past, down the stairs.

Poor Marguerite had not been happy since she left the island. The ruthless destruction she had seen perpetrated by the crew of the Avenger equalled the atrocities of the pirates themselves.

Marguerite, in her untutored simplicity, had imagined that she could leave the island under the escort of Monsieur Claude, taking with her only the presents given to her by the Rajah. She thought that she could go to Pondicherry, to her aunt, and thus regain her family without offending the Rajah very much.

He would forgive her, she thought. He was so kind. Besides, he had no business to keep her from going to her aunt Eulalie.

But when she found herself as powerless under the leadership of Monsieur Claude as under that of the Red Rajah himself, she altered her mind, and began to wish she had never left the island.

But we will leave her to explain her feelings herself in due time. She descended to the drawing-room soon after, and found Mr. Earle there, gotten up in formal black, and talking to a tall gentleman, whose back was turned to her.

She entered so softly as not to be heard for some moments; and so had time to scan the stranger, and prepare herself for the meeting. It was he. She knew him in a moment. There was no mistaking that lofty figure, so full of haughty grace. His hair was clipped short, to be sure, and he was attired in the garments of an European fashionable; but it was he.

Now, at last, Mr. Earle turned round, and saw her.

"Ah! my dear ma'm'selle, we was just a-talkin' about you. Don Gregorio, this is Ma'm'selle Marguerite de Favannes, the romantic young lady as I told you of. Ma'm'selle, this is Don Gregorio Rodriguez, of Manila, as 'as the pleasure of knowing your lady-sau in Pondicherry."

Don Gregorio bowed low, with stately grace, and poor Marguerite courted, casting down her eyes in great confusion.

The don addressed her in French, and glided into a fluent conversation, without the slightest appearance of effort. Marguerite replied in low monosyllables, but her embarrassment was attributed to modesty, and there was no appearance of the two ever having met before.

The girl was very much relieved, however, by the appearance of Julia Earle, who sailed into the room a few minutes afterwards, fluttering in waves of Swiss muslin. Julia had heard of the arrival of the foreign millionaire, and was prepared to fascinate.

The Spanish gentleman was evidently much taken with her appearance, for he entered into a very lively talk with her at once. Julia spoke very good French, and the conversation was managed so as to bring Marguerite into it very frequently.

Julia discovered such a fund of information, wit, and repartee, that Don Gregorio and she were on splendid terms when dinner was announced. Mr. Earle was fain to sit by, and pretend to understand what was said, when he hardly knew a word of French.

When dinner was announced, the don stood up to offer his arm to the magnificent Julia, when Mr. Earle interposed, timidly:

"Ain't we a-goin' to wait for Claude, my dear? 'E ought to be in his pretty soon."

"Oh! never mind Claude," was Miss Julia's reply. "They can keep some soup hot for him, but we can't let every thing else get cold for him. Come, pa. Take Marguerite down."

From which dialogue several things may be inferred.

First, that Claude Peyton was intimate enough already at that house to be called by his Christian name. Second, that the fair Julia was too much engrossed with her new conquest to think of her old beau. Third, that she did not care much for Claude just at present.

All which things were partly true.

Claude was very intimate. Since he had brought Marguerite to Earle's house he had become more so than ever. When first the orphan girl arrived, Julia received her with effusion, and, as old Earle had said, the two girls became as "thick as pickpockets."

But, somehow, after a week or so, the affection had cooled, and Marguerite was a great deal alone in her room. And Claude was so much occupied in fitting out the Avenger for sea, that he was seldom at home. When he was, he was devoted to Marguerite.

But the girl herself had begun to treat him coldly, and the state of things was rapidly becoming unpleasant at the "Palms" when Don Gregorio arrived to stir up the waters.

In a few moments more the party entered the dining-room and took their seats at table.

Claude Peyton did not make his appearance till the dinner was over, and they were enjoying their dessert.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 92.)

The Mustangs:

A TALE OF THE CROSS TIMBERS.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE CHASE.

AT the dawn of the next day a singular spectacle would have presented itself to the view of an observer in a balloon, had such been present, above the south-eastern extremity of the Cross Timbers.

Within the heart of that scrubby barrier, in a clearing evidently the work of art, was collected the camp of Tiger Tail's tribe, lodges pitched and fires burning, in complete security. An impenetrable wall of wood surrounded them, all the secret openings of which were hidden behind screens of bush-

es. From the level and falling ground all round, the Cross Timbers being the highest part of the country, this arrangement was effectual. The smoke from the fires was quite invisible on the prairie.

The camp of Tiger Tail was empty of warriors, and only full of squaws and children.

The warriors of the tribe were gathered by the bank of the river, opposite to the band of Regulators, only about fifty strong, on the opposite bank.

Miquelez, seeing his enemies divided, as the morning dawned, had sent back the news to Tiger Tail, who had brought down all his warriors, now reduced to about a hundred and thirty, to dispute the river passage, and chastise the borderers, if he could.

But in the rear of these again, and entirely unsuspected, was a third party.

This consisted of Sheriff Hays, Colonel Magoffin, his nephew and niece, Edward Thornley and Wash Carrol, the latter pale and weak-looking, from fatigue and loss of blood.

This party was slowly approaching the scene of action from the direction of the corral of the mustangers. That corral remained intact, the Indians having neglected to stampede its inmates as yet, and Thornley had availed himself of the fact to provide news horses for himself, the colonel, and Eugene, the two last of whom had lost their own animals in the fight the evening before.

Thornley had selected the best horse that was left for himself—the very steel-gray stallion which Debar had failed to capture the day before. He knew from its appearance that it must be speedy, and he fancied that, very probably, he might yet have to try a hard race with the desperate Miquelez, before Tinnie was regained.

During the night he had learned the true character of his late partner, and made up his mind to capture him with the lasso, at any risk, and so win worship in the eyes of Louisiana Dupre.

The young lady had smiled on him, when she heard the news he had to tell, about the discovery of her cousin Tinnie. Thornley felt that he would sacrifice his life cheerfully for such another smile from those lips.

So that, when he rode cautiously forward with the brightening dawn, it was with a thrill of inexpressible joy that he realized, as he looked down from the last knoll between him and the river, that the game was in his own hands.

There lay the river below him, and the Indians were all dismounted on the near bank, their horses standing behind the shelter of a mottle, at least two hundred yards back. The only mounted persons were Tiger Tail and the dark murderer, Miquelez, and a single female figure. Thornley needed no diviner to tell him who that was.

The girl was seated upon a mustang pony, her arms tied behind her, and secured on the animal's back by stout thongs of buffalo-hide. Thornley heard a low exclamation beside him, and turning, beheld Eugene Dupre close to him, his face pale as ashes, his eyes blazing, as he looked at the short, burly figure of Miquelez, and the gay robe of Tiger Tail.

Especially on the latter did the young man gaze with enmity, as he realized the doom to which his cousin Tinnie was condemned, if he did not save her.

They were only about a quarter of a mile off now, and Eugene was about to spring forward without orders, when the sharp voice of Sheriff Hays retained him.

"See here, young man," said Jack, sternly; "you keep quiet till I give the word to move. I boss this job, and I'm not in the habit of making mistakes, either."

Eugene restrained his horse, though he looked longingly down toward the combat that was about to commence.

"Now, boys," said the sheriff, quietly, "spread along behind this crest, and don't a man move till I give the word. Then charge, and keep your fire, like they did at Bunker Hill, till you can see the whites of their eyes."

The borderers quietly obeyed the order, riding out into a thin skirmish-line behind the crest of the swell. There they waited, hidden away, till the sound of shots below announced that the fight was opened there.

Thornley, peeping cautiously over the brow of the hill, beheld the body of Regulators opposite riding down into the river, and opening fire on the Indians. The sight was inspiring and picturesque in the highest degree, as the bold horsemen, spreading out into a thin line of skirmishers, dashed into the water, the little puffs of white smoke shooting forth all along the line. The Indians, in a much thicker line, went running out of the mottle on foot, to meet them, firing and yelling, and in two minutes the fight became general.

But it did not last long.

As soon as the sheriff saw that the enemy was fairly engaged, and that the Indians were too busy to notice any thing, he gave the signal to charge; and down the hill swept his party—Hays himself far in advance of the foremost, on a thoroughbred charger, with a revolver in each hand.

At first the borderers charged silently down, in order to get as near as possible without being noticed, but the Indian sentry over the horses gave the alarm by firing his piece, and the whole line faltered in dismay.

Then the Regulators, on both sides of the river, uttered a tremendous yell, and charged home.

The Indians, taken in front and rear, and by surprise, offered not the shadow of resistance from that moment. With one accord they broke and fled toward their horses, without firing a shot.

But Hays' party swooped down on the horses with a yell, and reached them long before their owners. The cracking of revolvers, shouts, curses and yells, made a perfect Pandemonium of the river bank for some minutes, as the Seminoles, hemmed in on every side, and driven to desperation, sold their lives as dearly as they could.

In the midst of all the confusion, Edward Thornley and Eugene Dupre were only sensible of three persons in the melee, and these were Tiger Tail, Miquelez, and Tinnie Magoffin.

At the very first yell of the borderers in the rear, Tiger Tail seized Tinnie's rein, and turned both horses' heads to the westward. Miquelez cast a single glance backward, and then set spurs to his black steed, and fled along with them.

While Hays and the Regulators dashed into the fight with the Indians, Thornley and Eugene pressed forward, both with the same object, to catch Miquelez and his prize.

Thornley knew that the Black Mustang had ridden his horse all night, as also Tiger

Tail; while he and Eugene were mounted on fresh animals. Away they went, at full speed on the track of the fugitives, Eugene brandishing a revolver, Thornley gathering the coils of the silent but deadly lasso in his hand, as he went.

In three minutes more they were out of the fight, and rapidly gaining on the wearied steeds of the fugitives.

Toward the west, the prairie was open for some miles, but then it ended abruptly in the main body of the Cross Timbers itself, the only outlet being a narrow passage between the timber and the river.

Toward this narrow passage did Miquelez and Tiger Tail direct their steps, carrying with them their helpless prisoner.

Eugene Dupre uttered a violent curse of rage as he saw Tiger Tail look mockingly back at him, and wave his hand in triumph as he went. He dug his spurs into his animal until it seemed to fly, and felt himself creeping slowly but surely up. Behind him he could still hear the shouts and shots of the fight, and then it all faded away, as he put another mile between him and them.

Thornley rode a little in advance, not urging his horse much at first, but still gaining, from superior speed. The further they went, the oftener Miquelez and Tiger Tail turned to look. They seemed to be trying to make up their minds to resist; and at last, when they were within a quarter of a mile of the Timbers, both pulled up.

Miquelez pulled out a pistol, and held it close to Tinnie Magoffin's head, shouting:

"Go back, you accursed fools, or I'll shoot the girl!"

Eugene pulled up his horse in an instant, pale with fear.

"Let her go," he fairly yelled to the Portuguese; "let her go, and we won't follow you."

But Thornley never halted in his course. He came thundering on, with a tremendous shout, that so unsteady the nerves of Miquelez, that he involuntarily turned the pistol on the person of the mustanger. He fired hastily, and without aim, and the bullet whistled harmlessly by Thornley's temple. The next minute down came Eugene at full speed, with presented pistol, firing shot after shot at the murderer.

One of them struck him lightly on the side, but the most of them passed him as idly as his own had done. Still, they whistled so closely that Miquelez gave way. He was a coward, after all, and the next minute showed it; for he turned his horse's head and fled, leaving Tiger Tail alone to dispute the way.

Tiger Tail drew up his horse, and leveled his rifle. He had no pistol, and but one barrel to his rifle.

But Eugene was but a slender youth, and Tiger Tail was far the stronger.

The chief ducked his head, receiving the blows on the matted hair on his crown, and soon mastered the Creole, rolling him over on the prairie. Eugene struggled manfully and well. Finding he could make no impression with the pistol, he clung to the Indian's neck, and endeavored to seize him with his teeth, and to gouge his eyes out. But Tiger Tail had already drawn his knife, and was wrenching his hand in Eugene's hair, thrust back his head with a savage growl, and lifted the knife to strike.

The Creole thought his last hour was come, when shouts, and the galloping of horses near by, disturbed the chief; and Tiger Tail wavered and looked up. With lightning rapidity, Eugene seized his opportunity, and grasped at the Indian's wrist with both hands, wrenching away the knife. At the same time, with a well-planted kick, as he lay on his back, he struck Tiger Tail on the stomach, and half rolled him off.

But even then the chief was too much for him, recovering the knife from where it lay on the ground, and again throwing himself desperately on Eugene.

The second time the blade gleamed aloft, and was descending on Eugene's breast, when the sharp crack of a pistol sounded close by.

Tiger Tail uttered a hideous yell, and leaped up, falling over on his back on the grass, stone dead, the blood gushing from a hole over his heart. The next minute the clear, sharp voice of Sheriff Hays called out, as he galloped past:

"Catch that horse!"

Eugene staggered to his feet, to see the Regulators rushing past him at full speed, in chase of Tenny's mustangs, which they caught at a hundred yards off.

Eugene hurried up, and found them all standing round the prostrate body of Miquel, who lay on his face, sullen and motionless.

One of the borderers had cut Tenny's bonds, and the girl welcomed his face, the only familiar one to her, with a burst of gladness that wonderfully elated simple Eugene.

And now, by twos and threes, the Regulators came galloping up, followed by Colonel Magoffin and Louisiana Dupre, who had been watching the fight in safety, from the rear.

Great were the rejoicings between the reunited cousins, as they met, and Thornley sighed deeply with involuntary envy, as he saw the kisses so freely bestowed upon the restored brother by Louie, who had seen his perilous struggle with the Indian chief.

But Hays soon recalled them to a sense of the more terrible part of the business, when he said:

"Colonel Magoffin, you are aware, I suppose, that we have found the man after whom our band came here, Antonio Miquel, the murderer of Mr. Oscar Peyton, of Louisiana. Here he is."

And he pointed to Miquel.

Two of the stalwart Regulators had dismounted, and raised him from the ground; while they tied his hands behind his back, with a stout thong of deerskin. The prisoner made no resistance, only he kept his eyes riveted on Louisiana Dupre, in a way that made her shiver. Colonel Magoffin looked at him with disgust.

"I see the man," he said. "He has come out here to seek safety from his crimes, but God has directed me here to see him punished. I do not know him myself, but my nephew and niece recognize him perfectly."

"I do," assented Eugene, in a low voice. "It is the same man who murdered poor Oscar Peyton, and threw him into the bayou. They went out shooting in company, and a charge of buckshot, with his mark stamped on them, was found in the poor fellow's back, when they recovered the body from the water. The sheriff has been hunting for him ever since."

"Are you willing to swear to this, young man?" asked Hays. "If so, we shall have a short trial. Bring the prisoner back, men."

The whole party took up their homeward march to the mottled where the fight had begun, where they found about twenty Indian prisoners, the sole survivors of the fight and massacre.

Here a court was organized, in regulator style, the lieutenant of the borderers acting as judge, and twelve of the men composing a jury.

The evidence was short and conclusive. Baptiste Ledoux and Eugene Dupre testified to finding the body of Oscar Peyton shot in the back with slugs, which were stamped with Miquel's private mark.

The prisoner was asked if he had any thing to say.

He scowled at Eugene, and answered: "Not much. My time's come, I shot Oscar Peyton, because I hated him. He loved that young fool's sister, and so did I. He was a soft milkop of a fellow, educated for the church, and she was engaged to be married to him. I swore that she never should, and she never shall. If you smart fellows hadn't come up when you did, I should have had her and her dainty cousin there. Now, curse you all! Do your worst! I've said my say."

There was a low murmur of disgust around the circle, and the judge asked: "Is there any one here wants to say any thing why this fellow shouldn't be swung up? If so, let him speak now."

There was no answer.

"Well, then," pursued the judge, "we'll take the votes of the jury. Nick Harding, what say you? Is this man guilty or not guilty?"

"Guilty," replied the huge borderer addressed in a deep, solemn voice.

"Tom Davis, Bill Sutton, Ed. Harrod," continued the judge, calling out the names of the different juries, and putting the same question to them in turn.

Without a single dissenting voice, each man uttered his verdict in the same word, so dreadful when heard at the close of a trial for murder:

"GUILTY."

Then followed a solemn silence, during which the judge looked at the prisoner, who trembled visibly. Then the judge said: "Prisoner, you've been tried by prairie-law. You ain't had no chance to git off on a quibble. You killed the poor fellow, and you owned up. I sentence you to be hung, right off, to that tree, and the Lord have mercy on your soul! This here court's closed."

And he rose from his seat on a fallen log, and stretched himself with great satisfaction. The Regulator jury yawned in chorus. It was old work to them.

"Come, colonel," said Hays, in a quiet tone to Magoffin, "let's be off to your shanty. My fellows will rush this funeral through without us. The ladies are not used to this sort of thing."

Magoffin bowed, with a grateful look to the borderer for his considerate kindness; and turned away his horse.

"Come, Tenny. Come, Louie," he said, sadly. "Our little home is made desolate enough, I fear; but you are still left, my children, and that is much. Let us go."

They rode over the plain toward the desolate ruins of the wagons and block-house, with sad hearts. In one day, all their little household goods had been scattered to the winds, and their negroes were all killed and scalped.

Wash Carroll rode with them, trying, in his rough way, to console the colonel. "Never mind, curnel," he said. "This hyar ain't as bad as it mout be. Yer all left alive, what's white, and me and my kum-rads hyar, we'll buckle to and help yer. Besides, Curnel Hays and his boys ain't the fellers to let you stay here, without helpin' yer a bit, and ye kin scratch along till yer cotton's riz."

"Ah! Wash!" said Magoffin, sadly, "I have no hands now to raise cotton. I left the poor faithful fellows to defend themselves, and what's the consequence? They were all butchered. If I had stayed there, it might not have been."

"See hyar, curnel," said Wash, stoutly, "I made yer do that ar'. Ef yer'd a-staid thar', you and Miss Tenny would a' ben skulped. That's sartin. Now, here's Sheriff Hays 'll tell you what to do."

"I think, colonel," said Hays, "that there is no need to despair. You have lost all your negroes and three empty wagons, but the Indians had no time to touch the stuff in the block-house, and your cattle were quite unharmed when I saw them. My fellows and I will help you finish your block-house and stockade, and you can turn stock-farmer, if you will. It needs very few hands, and you will have all these Indian ponies, and your own cattle to commence with. Many a man has come to riches in Texas, with no trouble, on smaller beginnings."

"And, colonel," said young Thornley, blushing, "if you wouldn't think it a liberty, Wash Carroll and I will join stocks with you, and make a big corral for all our horses together. Poor Wash is too badly hurt to be able to travel with me to Nacogdoches; and I think that if we break these mustangs to harness, we can sell them for a good price, even if we have to ship them as far as St. Louis or Cincinnati."

As Thornley said this his heart beat hard, for fear of a refusal; and he carefully avoided looking at Louie Dupre, the very one on whose account the proposition was made. Colonel Magoffin made no reply for some time, and Thornley began to fear he was to be refused, when, glancing at the colonel, he observed the big warrior's face working.

Magoffin rode alongside presently, and held out his hand.

"Mr. Thornley," he said, in a choked voice, "I see your kindness, and I thank you for it. Sir, you are a true gentleman. But I can not consent that you should forego your prospects in life to help an old man, who has nothing left in the world now but his daughter and niece. It would not be just, sir."

"And I tell you, sir," said Thornley, obstinately, "that I have made up my mind to settle here for good and all, even if I have to live alone with old Wash here."

"Yes, curnel," said that worthy himself. "Me and Ed, we hev fixed it, quite porman, as I may say. We're a-goin' to settle down hyar, like a kuppel o' jolly bachelors, seein' as the plains is ruined for huntin' anyway, and it's settle or move on with us, all the time. I'm gettin' e'en a most tired o' movin', and havin' folks comin' arter me all the time; so hyar I stay."

Finally Magoffin gave in to the plan, with much gratitude, and the very same day operations were commenced.

What fourteen pair of hands had begun, over a hundred finished. Knowing Jack Hays even impressed the Indian prisoners into the work of hauling logs to finish the block-house, and inclosing a point of the river with a strong stockade. The Indians were only too glad to purchase their liberty by a few days' work, and a week after every thing was complete.

A strong block-house of green wood, perfectly fireproof, and soddied to make it more so, towered at the corner of a strong-spiked stockade, loop-holed all along the top, with a bank of earth thrown up inside, for the defenders to stand on.

A tract of nearly a hundred acres was inclosed as a corral, with strong snake fence, strengthened at the corners, while the animals could be driven within the stockade at night. The two mustangs drove their captured animals with little trouble, by twos and threes, into the inside corral, and then the Regulators left them in peace and safety.

Their own task still remained to them, being nothing less than the transportation of Tiger Tail's predatory band back to the Seminole reservation in the Indian Territory. This they accomplished without any more difficulty, for the spirit of the few surviving warriors was broken by their late defeat.

Besides, there were so many squaws to choose from, and to work for their fortunes, that the remnants of the warriors bid fair to live in clover. All the captured horses, however, except sufficient for the absolute necessities of the Indians, were turned into Colonel Magoffin's corral, to compensate him from his losses.

The poor negroes and the brave overseer were buried decently. As Wash Carroll stood by Strother's grave, he emphatically remarked:

"You war a man, neighbor; you war. I never seed a better in all the skinnages I over fit in. You smashed out yer durnd brains wif yer bar hands, and that's more nor most men kin say."

What more is there to tell? Any of our readers must surmise the truth by this time. How sweet Louie Dupre, in course of time, so far forgot her grief for the lost Oscar, as to look without displeasure on the silent, earnest homage of Edward Thornley, and at last to own a fluttering feeling of liking, regard, pity, friendship, love, in gradual succession, for that happy individual. How Thornley made a trip to the States, and returned with all his worldly belongings invested in blood horses and cattle, to improve the common stock. How the stock increased and multiplied, year by year, till Magoffin's ranche numbered its herds by the thousand. How Eugene became an ardent stock-raiser, and finally married pretty Tenny Magoffin, and became the father of a stock of a different kind, while Wash Carroll was "master of the horse."

All this and more too, my readers can imagine, and still be short of the mark.

Mrs. Edward Thornley, nee Dupre, is quite

cheerful now, and often thanks Heaven for the chance that brought her in contact with honest Wash Carroll and her husband, and saved her from THE BLACK MUSTANGER.

THE END.

Laura's Peril: OR, THE WIFE'S VICTORY.

A STORY OF LOVE, FOLLY, AND REPENTANCE.

BY BARTLEY T. CAMPBELL,
AUTHOR OF "IN THE WEB," "OUT IN THE WORLD,"
ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER VIII. ALL ABOUT LOVE.

WHEN John Nevin reached the hotel, he found Mabel and Alice talking to George Dalby on the veranda.

"Here's Nevin," said the latter, as John approached. "Now, to use *Cutler's* words, he can give us 'an opinion as is an opinion.'"

"On what?" asked John.

"Love, of course—the one divine passion that rules the universe."

"I'm but a novice in such matters," and John Nevin smiled as he answered.

"That's all well enough for you to say, but possibly Madame Robsart thinks you an adept."

Dalby was laughing as he said this, in a careless, free and easy way, as he said every thing, and did not notice how John Nevin's brow darkened, nor how vivid Alice Houston's face became.

Mabel did, though, and she knit her brows, and looked hard at Dalby.

He saw at once he was sailing in dangerous waters, and he determined on getting into deep soundings at once, and so he continued:

"We were talking about Mrs. Browning's poem, 'Loved Once,' and while the young ladies here have clung to the poet's assertion, that true love never passes away, I have maintained that a man may madly love a woman today, and to-morrow view her charms with indifference, or even, in extreme cases, with aversion."

John Nevin thought of Laura, and said: "I hardly agree with you, Dalby. Love is a sort of infatuation—it is hard to cure, no matter how unreasonable it may be, or how disagreeable the consequences."

"But should you discover the object of your devotion to be wholly unworthy, you don't mean to say that love outlives respect?"

Alice had her black, glowing eyes fixed full on John Nevin's face, as he answered: "Most assuredly not; respect and admiration are the source of love. If these be dried up, the tender plant perishes for lack of nourishment."

"Then you agree with Mr. Dalby that Mrs. Browning is in error, when she says, 'he never loved who says 'I loved once.'"

It was Alice who spoke, and she addressed herself to John.

He replied: "Yes, I take sides against the poet, but I agree with the other poet, Tennyson, when he says:

"This better to have loved and lost,
Than never to have loved at all."

The conversation was interrupted, at this point, by the arrival of Mr. and Mrs. Houston. The former brought a letter for Mabel, from Joe Dormer, and excusing herself, she ran up-stairs to her room, to read the precious missive.

It was a lengthy epistle, covering eight pages of large-sized letter-paper, and it was full of tender words, pretty put Joe's handwriting and diction had improved wonderfully, and he informed her now that he had become quite a politician, and his friends were urging him to enter the canvass for Assembly.

"I work all day in the mines," he wrote, "and at night I study hard, and think of my dear little girl in the States, whom I am trying, ever so hard, to make myself worthy of."

He concluded by asking her for her picture, by return mail, and mentioning that Adam spoke of her every day, and hoped soon to see her again.

She kissed the letter, and forgot in her rapture all the fine speeches of George Dalby.

She was sitting by an open window, looking out into the night, with Joe's letter open in her lap, when Alice came up-stairs.

"What does Joe say?" she asked.

"That he is doing grandly; and that he is going to the legislature; and better still, he is coming home soon."

Alice did not seem to hear the reply, for she threw herself at full length upon the bed, and broke out into a fit of sobbing.

"Why, Alice, dear, what is the matter?"

"Oh, I don't know; everybody seems to be happy, but me."

"What has happened?"

"Nothing."

"Did anybody say any thing to you?"

"No."

"Was it John?"

Alice almost screamed, and Mabel knew now what she had guessed all along—that it was John.

She did not attempt to console her at once; she knew tears were a good panacea for an aching heart; but after the first gust had blown by, she said:

"John is very queer in his ways; still, I believe he loves you."

"But there is that woman—Laura. He is not cold to her,"—with a sob—"and Mabel, everybody knows she can wrap him around her fingers. Dalby said as much, a while ago."

"Dalby says so many things that he is scarce worth the minding. I believe John Nevin is a man of honor, and whatever influence this wicked woman may have upon him now, I don't think he will refuse to fulfill his engagement with you."

Alice put up her hands deprecatingly. "Oh, Mabel! how can you talk so?"

"Talk so! What do you mean?"

"You don't think I would have John Nevin's hand, if his heart belonged to that woman?"—she surely could not think so meanly of me."

Mabel did not reply. She felt that she was wholly unfit for a counselor in such a desperate strait. But, after a moment's silence, she replied:

"If I were you, I would tell Captain Houston the whole story, and he can inform John of the effect of his conduct; perhaps that will bring matters to a crisis."

"No; I could never do that, either," sighed Alice. "Better let events shape their own course; we must not do anything—can not do anything, but wait."

Young as Mabel was, she felt she could

not sit idly by, and see her dearest friend suffer, and while she loosened the silken braids of Alice's hair, that night, she thought out a plan, which only required daylight to put it into execution.

Long after Alice had sobbed herself to sleep, Mabel lay wide awake, thinking out what she should say to Laura Robsart in the morning.

CHAPTER IX. A MEETING.

LAURA'S shriek rung through Rockledge, sharp, wild, piercing, and brought the servants pell-mell to the colonnade, closely followed by Elton Robsart.

"What's wrong?" he asked, excitedly. "What's wrong here?"

"The young Missus has fainted," replied Price, the steward. "Somethin's scared her."

They carried her into the drawing-room, and bathed her temples and wrists with water.

With the first gleam of returning consciousness she realized the situation, and with her ready wit and iron will, prepared to meet it boldly.

"What was it, Laura, darling? What frightened you?"

She smiled up into the old man's face. "A nasty ugly bat flew right in my eyes. It was very weak and absurd to faint about so trivial a matter, but it scared me terribly. You know, Papa Robsart, I'm such a baby."

She wound her white arms about the old man's neck, and he bent over and kissed her, as he would a petted child.

That night Laura Robsart sat at her chamber window, and wondered what had brought Gilbert Rook's wife to America, and wondered, too, why she should be blamed for stealing Gilbert Rook's heart.

"I'm sure I never gave him the slightest encouragement," she muttered, "and I would now give a good round sum if somebody would induce both of them to cross the Atlantic, and leave me alone. God knows I have enough to conceal; enough to guard, without having them to torment me—with his protestations of love, and she with her threats of vengeance."

She looked up at the moon, now sailing bright in the heavens, at the stars twinkling like myriads of diamonds, and then at the sea, on which the moonlight lay like silver sheets; and while she gazed, another vision arose in her mind, of a lonely cabin nestling beneath the snow-capped Sierras; of a struggle in the night, and then she covered her eyes, to shut out the stiff, stark body with the gaping wound in the neck.

"Oh, Heavenly Father! Can I never forget—never forget? Is there no such thing as Lethe to be found anywhere?"

She moaned aloud in agony. It was almost midnight when she shut down her window at last, and threw herself upon her bed, and it was late the next morning when she came down to breakfast. She had not yet finished her meal, when a servant came to her.

"If madam pleases, there's a young lady in the drawin' room, as wishes to see you when you are at leisure."

She got up at once, her appetite was not a craving one, and, after smoothing her hair, and shaking out the ample folds of her morning-wrapper, she tripped into the long, cool drawing room.

As she entered, Mabel Lynn arose, and the two women looked into each other's eyes. Laura Robsart's heart stood still, and she felt herself growing faintish and weak. Clutching at a chair, she managed to say:

"I have been very ill, excuse me—I feel faint. Did you wish to see me, miss?"

The tall, dark, woman, which lined that splendid apartment, reflected two faces that bore a striking resemblance to each other; indeed, so much so, that the owners of both were considerably abashed.

Mabel was the first to recover. "You will excuse me, madam, for intruding on your privacy; but when you learn my motive, I trust you will not consider my mission either un lady-like or obtrusive."

Laura bowed.

"Go on—speak freely."

Mabel hung down her head. She did not know how to begin. Finally she managed to say:

"You know John Nevin?"

"Yes, very well."

Laura was calm, now, as a summer sea; she had control of every nerve and muscle again.

"He met you in Europe?"

"Yes, with a smile."

"And fell in love with you?"

Laura lifted her brows in affected surprise.

"Really, I could not say you are correct. The gentleman has not been so frank as you, miss."

"But it's true; and you, madam—you must know it."

"Must I?"

"Yes, you must!" Mabel was getting angry at this fencing and banter. "He was here last evening, and the night before."

"You seem to keep a strict watch upon Mr. Nevin's comings and goings. Is he any thing to you?"

"No, nothing in the world."

"Then why are you so interested in where he spends his evenings?"

"Because John Nevin is already engaged to his cousin Alice."

Laura bit her lip, and, after a pause, said: "Well, what have I got to do with all this? I'm not John Nevin's keeper."

"No; but you can make a good, pure girl supremely happy, if you only will."

Mabel spoke pleadingly, and she noticed that the iceberg was beginning to melt.

"What would you have me do?"

"Discard John Nevin," replied Mabel, promptly. "Tell him, when he comes again, that you have heard of his engagement to his cousin; that you do not love him a bit, and that, if he can not be true to one woman, he can not be to another."

"And why should I do this?"

"Why should you do this? Because, if you don't, between you and him, you'll break Alice Houston's heart."

"And what's to repay me for this sacrifice—am I to give all, and get nothing?"

It did look, even to Mabel, a little hard that the sacrifice should be altogether on one side, and, at a loss for any thing better to say, she replied:

"The pleasure that always follows the doing of a noble action will reward you."

A silence fell upon the two women. At length, Laura asked:

"Did Miss Alice know of your coming?"

"No—no one does."

Laura did not speak again for a moment; then she said:

"And, suppose I do this for you—will you think well of me for it?"

"If you do this, you deserve to be thought well of, and I will pray for you as long as I live, night and morning."

Tears were gathering in Laura's eyes, as she added:

"I will do this thing—this thing you ask of me. For your sake—mind, for you."

"God bless you!" exclaimed Mabel, catching Laura's hand and kissing it. "You are not a bad woman—you are an angel."

Laura Robsart wound her arms tightly about Mabel, and replied, through blinding tears:

"Think of me always as unfortunate, but not wicked; more sinned against than sinning."

They parted then, but, ere Mabel left the room, Laura asked her her name:

"Mabel Lynn," was the reply. "Not hard to remember."

"No, not hard."

Laura bowed and smiled, and when the retreating footfalls died away, she for a moment stood like a statue of whitest marble, there, where they had parted, her great blue eyes full of a yearning, agonizing light.

"Oh, come back to me, Mabel Lynn," she cried, at length, through ashen lips. "Come back to me, vision of youth and beauty! Come back to me!"

She fell upon her face on the carpet, and showered kisses on the spot where Mabel Lynn had stood but a moment since!

CHAPTER X. DROWNED.

AT noon, on that same day, Gilbert Rook's body was washed ashore, about a quarter of a mile south of Rockledge. It was found, with the wreck of his boat, and, naturally enough, everybody supposed that there had been a capsizing, and this was the result—a lifeless body, with matted hair, leering eyes, and open mouth.

The news spread like wildfire, far and near, and finally reached the ears of Sarah Rook—his wife.

She came down the shore, beating her hands together like cymbals, and shrieking: "I knew it would come to this! I knew it would—I knew it would!"

But, when she had elbowed her way through the dense throng, and caught sight of the ruin death had made, she turned black in the face, and, shaking her fist at Rockledge, cried:

"'Twas all her doings—the painted, beautiful devil; 'twas all her doings!"

Sarah Rook was dark enough at best—looked a great deal like a gipsy; but now her black eyes glistened like glass, and the hot blood flushed all her face, a glowing, darksome crimson.

"The woman's growing crazy," remarked a gentleman to another at his elbow.

Her quick ear caught the remark.

"No, I'm not. The woman ain't going crazy either; though, God knows, I've had enough to make a half-dozen women crazy."

Then she fell upon the ugly heap—all wet, and slimy, and bloated, and sobbed hysterically.

As the sun went down that evening, Gilbert Rook was buried.

Only a few curious people stood at the grave beside Sarah Rook.

She was silent now; her very white teeth were set hard together, and her brownish hands, on which bright diamonds sparkled, were locked together, as tightly as if they had been welded fast.

The yellow clouds rattled noisily upon the coffin-lid; the woman stared into the yawning grave; the sun dropped lower and lower, and the spectators, awe-struck, stole silently, one by one, away.

When the sexton had finished his work, Sarah Rook turned away, too, with a dumb, fearless agony in her face, that made her look actually frightful.

"Mrs. Rook. Say, Mrs. Rook!"

She looked around, and met the gaze of a coarse, middle-aged man.

"Well, what do you want?"

He was unprepared for the query; it was so cold and blunt, it confused him.

"I'm sorry for your trouble," he said

